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# LETTERS

ADDRESSED TO

M<sup>R</sup>. JOHN GLAS,

IN ANSWER TO HIS

DISSERTATION ON INFANT-  
BAPTISM.

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—See, here is water; what doth hinder me  
to be baptized? Acts viii. 36.

—If thou believest with all thine heart, thou  
mayest. Ver. 37.

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*By Archibald McLean.*

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G L A S G O W,

Printed by ARCHIBALD M'LEAN, Junior:

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THOUGHTS  
PREFACE

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# P R E F A C E.

**T**O assign reasons, or make an apology for the publishing of these letters, is altogether needless. If I have truth on my side, the importance of the subject, and the general inattention paid to it, (especially in Scotland) will sufficiently justify me: if I have not, all apologies are vain.

It is indeed a pretty common observation, That little benefit or edification results from religious controversies. Whatever truth may be in this, with respect to those whose cool indifferency indicates their having nothing at stake, or whose unlimited charity is equally courteous to truth and falsehood;

yet I cannot be persuaded that this observation is without exception. The most important revolution that ever happen'd in the world, was brought about by means of controversy, disputes and contention \*; and afterwards, when Antichrist had slain the witnesses, quash'd the controversy, and curs'd all around him into implicit faith, these horrid chains of darkness were again burst asunder by a free inquiry into the Scriptures, and a contending for the faith once delivered to the saints.

BUT whatever may be said of controversy, it may be presumed, that the person who can stand neutral in all religious disputes, must either have no creed at all, or hold it very cheap.

As the point of believer-baptism has been controverted for these fifteen

\* Acts ix. 22. xvii. 17. and xix. 8, 9.

teen centuries past, I have not the vanity to imagine, that any thing here advanced will finally decide the matter; for I am fully persuaded, that there are other principles of opposition to truth in human nature than simple ignorance.

My controversy is chiefly with INDEPENDENTS, who profess to believe, That Christ's kingdom is not of this world; and that the carnal birth does not distinguish his subjects, nor intitle to spiritual privileges: these, especially will discern the propriety of the arguments and feel their weight.

As for the national church, I have little quarrel with her on this head, it being equally reasonable that the children of the flesh should be counted for the seed, as that a nation of this world should be counted a visible church of Christ. For whilst it is supposed, that the  
kingdoms

kingdoms of this world, which assume the name CHRISTIAN, do, in some sense, succeed the Jewish Theocracy, and are interested in the covenant of circumcision, it will be hard to convince them, that the command to circumcise Jewish infants does not equally warrant the baptizing of theirs.

I hope the reader will not satisfy himself with carping at occasional inadvertencies, but candidly consider the scope and force of the arguments, and especially the scriptures adduced in support of them.

If what I have advanced in these letters have a tendency to free any of the subjects of Christ from human inventions, and rouse their attention to the unerring rule, my end is gained.

G E N E



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## ERRATA.

Page Lines from the head.

3 7 For infants, read infants

32 11 For Colosse, read Philippi

Ibid. 25 Dele bap-

48 30 For apostles, read apostle's

53 Note, l. 5. For legitimate seed, read legitimate seed

78 19 For of, read off

82 1 For thought, read though

86 15 Dele here

88 20 For believers, read believer's

LET.

# LETTER I.

S I R,

**I**T is now a considerable time since I read and considered your excellent Treatise, entitled, *The TESTIMONY of the KING of MARTYRS, &c.* which I take to be a most simple and scriptural illustration of our Lord's good confession, which he witnessed before Pontius Pilate, concerning his kingdom, as distinguish'd from the Jewish Theocracy, the kingdoms of this world, and the false churches that now bear that form. Holding the analogy betwixt type and antitype in your eye, the scripture evidence beams in upon you from every quarter to support the main point, whilst you, unshackled by human systems, admit it in its most genuine and simple meaning.

The reading of this excellent treatise gave me vast satisfaction, and prepossessed me with a favourable bias in behalf of your other writings: supposing you still to pursue the principles upon which you set out, I was unwilling to admit any such sense of your words as seemed to deviate from them.

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Thus

Thus you may see with what favourable impressions I proceeded to peruse the rest of your works: and, indeed, I was not disappointed in \* many of your tracts, which contain a plain and scriptural view of the doctrine, order and worship of the apostolic churches, till I arrived at your third volume, where I found a piece on *Catholic Charity*, and a letter, entitled, *The Rule of Forbearance defended*, in both of which you discard all forbearance whatever, as a thing unwarrantable in Christian churches since the finishing of the New Testament revelation, and so confine the apostolic directions, on that subject, to the peculiar disputes that arose betwixt the Jews and Gentiles about the lawfulness of meats and drinks.

When I compared this with what you had advanced before, on that head, in the *Testimony of the King of Martyrs* †, I could not but observe a manifest inconsistency betwixt them. However, I was unwilling to judge rashly in this affair, thinking it unlikely you should publish contradictory principles in one and the same edition of your works.

But, proceeding to your fourth volume §, I found *A Dissertation on Infant Baptism*, which I considered with care and attention; and the rather, as I was never fully satisfied with any thing I had formerly read on that subject; and being desirous of further

\* I say, *many*, because there are several things exceptionable, and particularly a little tract in the second volume, entitled, *Salvation to a Believer's House*.

† Page 123, 124.

§ Page 192, — 210.

further light into it, I had some hope you would produce such evidence in its behalf from scripture, as would remove my scruples, establish me in the received opinion, and enable me to bring my infants to baptism in faith. But how great was my disappointment when I found, that your main arguments for the baptism of infants stood in flat opposition to the scriptures, as well as to the most essential points contended for in the *Testimony of the King of Martyrs!* However, it may be allowed, that you have done it as much justice as the bounds of your tract, and the nature of the subject could well permit.

As the subject of scripture-baptism has been but little attended to in Scotland, and as you have contributed your part to thicken the darkness that had overspread the minds of men about it, in so much, that some of your adherents have boasted of this Dissertation as unanswerable, I shall, according to my ability, follow you step by step through the whole of your arguments, and accommodate my answers to the nature and manner of them, without either artfully evading their force, or wilfully perverting their meaning.

I shall conclude this introductory epistle, by stating what appears to me the scripture view of baptism. And,

1. Baptism is an ordinance, instituted by the Lord Jesus Christ, under the new and better covenant, which belongs only to the apparent subjects of that covenant, upon the profession of their faith

in Christ, and obedience to him; being a sign and representation to them of the cleansing efficacy of his blood, and regenerating operations of his Spirit, and so of their having communion with, and conformity to him in his death, burial and resurrection, by dying unto sin and living unto righteousness. Matth. xxviii. 19. Acts viii. 37. Rom. vi. 4. Col. ii 12.

2. The Name into which believers are to be baptized, is that of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Matth. xxviii. 19.

3. The Mode or Manner of Baptism is immersion, or dipping of the body in water, as appears from the proper acceptation of the Greek word, and from the circumstances of our Lord's baptism, Matth. iii. 16. and those of the eunuch's, Acts viii. 38, 39.

Now, whether infants are the proper subjects of this ordinance or not, shall be considered in the subsequent letters. Meantime, I am,

S I R,

Your, &c.

LET:

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## LETTER II.

S I R,

**I**N the Introduction to your Dissertation on Infant-baptism, you make *an observation on several questions and disputes about baptism.* But I have no concern with any thing there, excepting the last paragraph, where you observe,

That ‘ the denying of infant-baptism comes of making the salvation by baptism to lie in some-thing else than the thing signified; even that, whatever it be, which distinguishes the adult Christian from his infant: though our Lord expressly declares, that we must enter his kingdom even as infants enter it. The first opposition that we hear of to infant-baptism, turn’d salvation upon an entire sort of believing, whereof infants are incapable; whereas there is not any true faith, or sincere confession of the faith, but that alone which acknowledges, that salvation lies only and wholly in the thing signified in baptism. And, if we enquire how that thing saves us? our Lord answers, Just as it saves our infants. The denial of infant-baptism must have always proceeded from a disbelief of this.’

*Ans.* 1. If we maintain that elect infants obtain salvation by the sovereign free grace of God,

through the sufferings, death and resurrection of Christ, without regard to any outward ordinance, how does it follow, that their salvation lies not only and wholly in the thing signified to the adult in baptism, but in something else?

2. If we deny infant-baptism, because it is neither commanded nor exemplified in scripture; because we know not who among them are the true Israel; and because it cannot be a sign to them of the thing signified; will it therefore follow, that when they become visible believers, and can discern baptism to figure their salvation by the death and resurrection of Christ; I say, will it then fairly follow, that their salvation must turn upon something else than the death and resurrection of Christ which is represented to them in that ordinance, or upon any thing about themselves distinguishing them from infants? Certainly no: that which gives the answer of a good conscience to the adult believer in baptism, must be the very same thing with that which saves elect infants.

3. If an explicit profession of the faith, a discerning of the thing signified, and an engagement to put off the body of the sins of the flesh, be qualifications which turn the salvation of the adult upon a different footing from that of infants, or the thing signified in baptism; then, by necessary consequence, these qualifications are not to be looked for in adults, either at baptism or the Lord's supper. But if you plead for these things in adults, does it not plainly follow, that both baptism  
and



and the Lord's supper are to them most pernicious ordinances, since they require such qualifications as (according to you) 'make their salvation to lie in something else than the thing signified?' But the contrary is evident from scripture.

4. Though we own, that the thing signified in baptism saves infants just as it saves adults, yet we deny infant-baptism; for we distinguish betwixt the *thing signified* and the *sign signifying*; the former is bestowed upon all the elect of God, whether adults or infants; the latter, on those who appear to be such, and can discern its meaning, who are only the adult. Again, we distinguish betwixt the *objects of God's everlasting love* and the *proper subjects of gospel ordinances*; the first he judges of by the rule of his omniscience; the last must be judged of by the rules of revelation, or the personal characters by which he hath pointed them out in his word. To assert then, That the denial of infant-baptism must have always proceeded from a disbelief that salvation lies only and wholly in the thing signified in baptism, is as untrue as it is confidently asserted.

5. But then this assertion stands true upon your plan, and, like an arrow shot perpendicular, reverts upon your own head: for if 'the denying of infant-baptism comes of making the salvation by baptism to lie in something else than the thing signified,' then infant-baptism is absolutely necessary to salvation; since, otherwise, they must be baptized upon a self-righteous plan, which cannot

not save, but is opposed to the thing signified. I ask then, is not this like placing salvation in something else than the thing signified, even in that, whatever it be, which distinguishes infants from adult believers, and confines the thing signified to their baptism? Perhaps you are not aware of this; but did you really believe, that salvation lies only and wholly in the thing signified, you could never have imagined, that the denying of infant-baptism could any way affect this principle, or make any difference in what saves.

So far were your forefathers from acknowledging, that 'salvation lies only and wholly in the 'thing signified,' that their main argument for introducing the baptism of infants, turn'd upon a supposed necessity of it to salvation. But they had not then learned to confine the salvation by baptism to that, whatever it be, which distinguishes the infants of believers from those of infidels; though indeed they were at no loss; for the ancient *necessity of baptism to salvation*, is by far a better argument than the modern *covenant holiness*, or *salvation to a believer's house*. Nor can I see how infant-baptism could ever take place upon such arguments as are mostly used by Protestants in support of it, at this day; and therefore I think it very ungrateful in modern Pædobaptists to spurn at that which gave them a being, and which is still tacitely implied in their most refined pleas.

I am your, &c.

LET-

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## L E T T E R III.

S I R,

**I** Have been carefully considering the first section of your Dissertation, which *contains a scheme of the controversy, and state of the question about scripture precept and example.* You say,

‘ The whole plea against infant-baptism comes to this, That there is neither particular express precept nor indisputable example for it in the New Testament, where baptism is inseparably connected with a profession of the faith, which infants are not capable to make.’

*Ans.* Though our whole plea came only to what you mention, it would be sufficient to overthrow infant-baptism: for when we consider how particular and express God’s injunctions were, with respect to every circumstance of the old covenant rituals, we can never imagine, that such an important ordinance of the new covenant, would be left, as a matter of doubtful disputation, to be gathered only from dark and inconclusive hints, or dubious consequences.

But the truth is, there is neither precept nor example, direct nor indirect, particular nor general, express’d nor implied, in either the Old Testament or the New, in favours of infant-baptism;

so

so that our plea against it comes to more that you imagine.

‘ All this (you say) may be owned, at the same time that the inference from it is denied. ’

Here then you give up with express precept and indisputable example; but then you deny the inference, *viz.* That infants ought not to be baptized; because you think, that, by the same argument, we might debar women from the Lord’s supper: for you say, ‘ We can no more shew, by ‘ express particular precept, or indisputable example, that Christian women are included in the ‘ precept, *Do this in remembrance of me*, and; *Drink ye all of it*, than we can prove, by such precept ‘ or example, that Christian infants are comprehended in the precept, *Baptizing them.*’ And then you make no scruple to assert, That we have the same evidence for infants their being members of Christ’s body, as we have of believing women’s being such.

This is such a nonsensical evasion, that it is scarce worth while to take notice of it; but as your whole argument against the necessity of precept and example hinges upon it, it may be observed,

1. That Christian women are manifested to be subjects of gospel ordinances by a personal profession and character, answerable to what the scripture requires; but infants, as they can make no such profession, so the fleshly birth cannot denominate them subjects of baptism, any more than it can evidence their being born again.

2. The

2. The scripture expressly tells us, That there is no distinction of male and female among those who are one in Christ Jesus, Gal. iii. 28. whilst it make a very wide distinction betwixt the natural and spiritual seed, and shews, that the former, as such, have no right to the privileges of the latter; Rom. ix. 6, 7. Gal. iii. 29. Now, if the scripture allows of no distinction of sexes in the one body of Christ, neither ought you to muster up such a *chimerical* distinction in order to confound a *real* one; which still subsists betwixt infants and adult visible believers, with respect to gospel ordinances, as both the visible characters required, and the nature and design of these ordinances, shew:

3. You cannot but be sensible, that the precept, *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat, &c.* (1 Cor. xi, 28.) includes both sexes; for the word there translated *Man*, is not *ανηρ*, which is restricted to the male sex in distinction from the female, but *ανθρωπος*, which answers to the Latin *Homo*, and comprehends both male and female, except where some particular circumstance in the text restricts the sense. Here then the precept for eating the Lord's supper is as expressly directed to Christian women as it is to men. But I might have spared myself this criticism; for I am persuaded, that the weakest woman, that reads her English Bible, can be at no loss to see, that the word *Man* frequently comprehends both sexes.

‘ Now (say you) as soon as we begin to seek a warrant for any such thing in this manner, we must depart from the principle that every opposer  
‘ of

‘ of infant-baptism sets out upon, viz. That such  
 ‘ an exprefs precept, and fuch a plain example is  
 ‘ neceffary to fhew the warrant for it.’

*Anfw.* So it feems you are obliged to depart  
 from precept and example at the very outfet of  
 your journey. Indeed, your wisdom is to be com-  
 mended; for who would chufe to undertake a jour-  
 ney with fuch companions as every now and then  
 would be ready to trip up his heels, or plunge  
 him in the mire, when he had moft occafion for  
 their affiftance? Yet after all, you would have  
 prospered much better in your expedition, could  
 you have taken both precept and example along  
 with you in a friendly manner; they would have  
 faved you many an artful fhift which you are o-  
 bliged to ufe in your progreffs.

I am not at all furprifed you fhould depart from  
 the principle we fet out upon; but it is very hard,  
 that, in fo doing, you fhould be obliged alfo to  
 depart from the principle you yourfelf fet out u-  
 pon, in your departure from the national church.  
 In your fpeech before the commiffion of the gene-  
 ral afsembly, you give the following reafon for not  
 fubfcribing the *Formula*, viz. ‘ becaufe I cannot  
 ‘ fee precept or example in fcripture for the go-  
 ‘ vernment of this national church by kirk-feffions,  
 ‘ prefbyteries, provincial and national fynods.—  
 ‘ And if it fhould be my opinion, that it requires  
 ‘ precept or example in God’s word for fuch a go-  
 ‘ vernment, to warrant me to declare that it is  
 ‘ founded in that word;—I fee no propofition  
 ‘ in

in the public standards of the church that condemn this \*.

Now, Sir, I ask, Why do you depart, in stating the controversy about infant-baptism, from that very principle, without which (by your own confession) you have no warrant to declare that it is founded in the word of God?

You take notice of another troublesome principle of the Baptists, viz. 'That baptism is inseparably connected in the New Testament with a profession of the faith, which infants are not capable to make.'

You might have answered this as the former, by telling us, That we have no instance in scripture of women making an express profession of their faith before their receiving the Lord's supper; and why should we require it of infants before baptism? But this would be too bare-faced, and therefore you say,

'It may be owned, that baptism cannot be administered to any, but upon a confession by which the baptized can be called disciples according to the scriptures: for it can well be said, that infants are to be baptized upon a profession of the faith by which the scripture warrants us to account them disciples with their parents, as well as to look on them, with their believing parents, as holy and of the kingdom of heaven, or the true church, into which all Christians are baptized.'

Glas's Works, vol. I. p. 221.

The necessity of a profession in order to baptism, it seems, may be owned; but how can it be owned, without denying baptism to those who cannot make a profession? For this you have a curious *salvo* at hand, without which you would never have own'd it, *viz.* Though infants cannot profess the faith, yet their parents can do it for them; and this warrants us to account them disciples, and baptize them. This is indeed strange reasoning.

Disciples are made by teaching:

Believing parents are taught:

Therefore, Their children are disciples, and may be baptized.

Was ever logic so ridiculous, where a bare assertion, or begging of the question, is palm'd upon us for a just conclusion.

However, by granting that a profession is necessary to infant-baptism, you entirely overthrow what you charge upon us in the introduction, else you are guilty of the same thing. For if you will not baptize infants, without the profession of the parents, then it is evident that you hold something necessary to baptism whereof infants are incapable, even that profession which the parents make in their stead, and that faith of which it is the profession. May we not then, with equal justice, retort, That the requiring such a profession of the parent in order to the baptism of his infant, comes of making the salvation by baptism to lie in something else than the thing signified; even that,

what-



whatever it be, which the adult Christian must perform for his infants, and which gives them a right to baptism in distinction from the children of infidels.

But I had almost forgot your scripture proof for the discipleship of infants.

For when the Judaizers sought to have the gentile Christians circumcised to keep the law, as necessary to their salvation by Christ, Peter said to them, *Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples.* But the Judaizers were seeking to have this yoke laid upon the infants of the believing parents; and therefore Peter, who received the command to baptize disciples, took that designation to comprehend infants, and called them disciples with their parents.

But though it be granted, that the infants of believing Gentiles would be circumcised with their parents, it is by no means evident, that Peter comprehends these infants in the designation *disciples*; for what other manner of expression is it natural to think the apostle would use, upon this occasion, though infants had been excepted in that designation? If we look into the context, we shall find, that those whom he terms disciples, are characterized in such a manner as will not apply to infants; *And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren, &c.* (Acts xv. 1.) so they were brethren capable of being taught. *God which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no*

*difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore, why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, &c. ver. 8, 9, 10.* Now, can any thing be more plain, than that the apostle's argument against circumcising the gentile disciples, turns upon the evidence of their having received the Holy Ghost, and of having their hearts purified by faith? The apostle James calls them, *those which from among the gentiles have turned unto God.* If such then be the account given of those whom the apostle terms *disciples*, it is plain, infants are not included in that designation, though, (according to the law of circumcision) they might be circumcised with their parents.

Besides, it was not simply *circumcision*, nor the *keeping of the law of Moses*, which Peter calls a yoke that neither they nor their fathers were able to bear; for both they and their fathers had borne this; but it was the *doctrine of its necessity unto salvation*, which was this intolerable yoke, as appears from ver. 1, 5. 'Twas this which made the law of Moses a killing letter, a ministration of death and condemnation. To this doctrine the apostle opposes *salvation by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ*, ver. 11. But this doctrine could be no such yoke upon the neck of infants, who could not understand it; it could neither please nor grieve them. Therefore it follows inevitably, that infants were not reckoned by Peter amongst those whom he terms *disciples*.

Further,

Further, you may consider how our Lord himself describes his disciples in Luke xiv. 26, 27. John viii. 31. and xiii. 35. and xv. 8. These are characters without which, he says, no man can be his disciple; but these characters will not apply to infants, and therefore the designation *disciples* cannot be given them. Besides, according to the scripture, disciples are made by teaching; for the word, in the original, signifies a *learner*, or *one that is taught*. But infants are incapable of being taught; therefore they cannot be disciples in the scripture stile and way of speaking.

But then you say, 'According to the commission in Mark's gospel to preach and baptize, infants must either be reckoned with the believing or the damned. For as to the believing there connected with baptism, it is expressly said, *He that believeth not shall be damned*: and therefore if we cannot look on the infants of the faithful, dying in infancy, as damned, we must look upon them, according to this scripture, as believing, and so intitled to baptism, here connected with the believing that includes them in distinction from the damned.'

Here, it seems, we are laid under a necessity of judging the state of infants: if they are children of believers, we must reckon them with the believing and saved; but if they are children of unbelievers, we must, by the same rule, reckon them with the unbelieving and damned, according to your view of Christ's commission. And this reckoning must

be of such as die in infancy; for you own, there may be occasion for another kind of reckoning with respect to those of them who arrive at an adult state. But, dear Sir, are you not as sensible as any, that there is not one syllable in all that commission, either of the infants of believers or infidels, dying in infancy, or otherwise? So that you must go elsewhere to establish this notion.

We must either, it seems, own, that infants are believers, or reckon they are damned dying in infancy; but what if we should neither own the one nor the other? The scripture lays us under no such necessity of determining their state; but on the contrary, shews, that the sovereign purpose of God according to election will stand, with respect to children that have done neither good nor evil, whether they ever in this life arrive at a capacity for knowing and believing the gospel, or not; yea, whether their parents be believers or not: so that we rest this matter upon the sovereignty and good pleasure of the righteous Judge, who *hath mercy on whom he will.* Rom. ix. 18.

But I beg, Sir, you would consider into what absurdities and inconsistencies, your judgment of the state of infants necessarily involves you. As,

1. If you draw the salvation of the infants of believers from these words, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved*; you must also, by the same rule, (as has been observed) infer the damnation of the infants of infidels from these other words, *he that believeth not shall be damned*, both being equally affirmed

firmed in this place. Now whether this be not as harsh and unmerciful a principle, as the popish damnation of unbaptized infants, I leave you to judge.

2. As the scripture informs us, that many of the adult children of infidels have been saved, it follows, that their salvation turns upon something which they have done in their riper years, since (upon your plan) they must have been damn'd dying in infancy.

3. Though you affirm the salvation of the children of believers, dying in infancy; yet you own, that many of them fall short of it when they survive that state\*. I ask then, what kind of salvation must that be, which can only be certainly secured by dying in infancy; which may take wing upon their first reflection, or wear out through length of time? Does that which saves dying infants, lose its whole efficacy on those of riper years; like certain medicines which are prepar'd only for children, but can have no effect on grown persons? Or, are they saved by free grace in infancy, but conditionally when they grow up, and so forfeit their salvation by failing in the terms? If so, I cannot help thinking, that you still hold a difference betwixt that which saves infants dying in infancy, and that which saves those who survive that state. Upon this plan, happy were it for thousands of the children of believers if they never survived this infant salvation, since they never attain the adult one! But dreadful is the case of the children of infidels,

infidels, dying in infancy, who, as they have no infant-salvation, never arrive at the age necessary for attaining adult-salvation!

4. As you found this infant-salvation upon the children's connection with their believing parents, I ask, what kind of connection is it? If it be the *fleshy* connection, how can spiritual blessings be derived in this manner? and if they be, what hinders the children from reaping the benefit of this connection in their adult state, seeing they are still the children of believing parents? But it is evident spiritual blessings come not by the *fleshy* relation; for Ishmael was thus related to believing Abraham; but was he therefore counted for the seed, and a child of the promise as Isaac was? Esau was thus connected with believing Isaac; but was he not hated whilst Jacob was loved, and that according to God's purpose of election, before either of them had done good or evil? If the connection betwixt the believer and his infants be *spiritual*, how comes this to be dissolved when they grow up, so that even an Esau or an Absalom may appear a son of perdition? Does a spiritual connection, that entails salvation, wear out through length of time? And when is the precise time that this connection ceases, and the children set up for themselves?

But after all, perhaps you will say, you are only pleading for that *judgment of charity* which we ought to exercise towards the infants of believers, whilst you do not pretend to judge their *real* state,

as it is in the sight of God. But this cannot be the case. For,

1. The text from which you form this judgment, will admit of no distinction of this nature. It is a real truth in the sight, purpose and intention of God, that *he that believeth shall be saved*; so that if the scripture class the infants of believers with the believing, they shall all as certainly be saved as the scripture declares it, or as God is true who hath promised it. However we, who cannot know the hearts, may be deceived by mens professions; yet God will never deceive us by his open declarations, which will stand true whether we believe them or not. He does not beg our judgment of charity to his veracity; but challenges our firmest belief upon our highest peril.

2. The judgment of charity respects our fellow men, goes upon plausible appearances, and implies a possibility of mistake. Now if God's open declarations, with respect to infants, be only a foundation for our judgment of charity; then, for any thing we know, we may be mistaken in our judgment from these declarations, and that not only as they respect the state of infants, but as they respect the foundation of our own faith and hope: for it is absurd to affirm, that the scripture enjoins full assurance of faith, whilst it gives us no other foundation for it, that what we have for our charitable view of one another, in which, it shews, we are often deceived. So that you see I must either consider you as determining the *real* state of infants, in the

the sight, purpose and intention of God, or as playing fast and loose with the open declarations of the God of truth.

If you should reply, That the scripture enjoins us to look upon infants in the same light with their parents; so that if we were assured of the salvation of the parents, we would be equally assured of the salvation of their children. I answer,

This is contrary to scripture facts. Abraham was a real believer in the sight of God, and declared to be so; yet the scripture never enjoins us to look upon his son Ishmael in the same light. Isaac was also a true believer, and an heir with Abraham of the same promise; yet we are not allowed to pass the same judgment upon his son Esau. David was a man after God's own heart; yet we are obliged to form another view of his son Absalom.

If it be objected, that these did not die in infancy, and so are foreign to the point. I answer,

1. Does our Lord's commission in Mark's gospel warrant us to believe they would have been saved, had they died in infancy? Or, does any other place in all the scripture give the least hint of this? Are we not expressly told, that Esau was hated, not only in his infancy, but before he was born, having done neither good nor evil?

2. If you believe that the purpose of God according to election will stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; and that infants and adults are saved on the same footing; how can you ever imagine, that



that their dying, or not dying in infancy, makes any alteration here?

3. The utmost that can be pled upon this point is, that as scripture does not determine the state of infants dying in infancy, it is safest to err on the charitable side. And, if this were all you plead for, I should not dispute it; though, for my own part, I think it more eligible to leave them entirely to the judgment of God.

Upon the whole, I cannot but observe a manifest juggling in your argument from our Lord's commission. First, you take it for granted; that infants, and particularly those of believers, are included in that commission, for no other reason, that I can see, but because you would have it so: then, by a wonderful kind of logic, you convert these infants into believers; which is indeed a very great act of charity, since otherwise, you tell us, they would be damned. Infants being thus logically converted and saved, their baptism must follow, for it is there connected with believing. But because you were sensible that both scripture and experience often exposes the deceit of such reasoning, you are obliged to screen yourself by the death of the poor infants; well knowing, that as they cannot expose the fallacy in their non-age; so their death will effectually prevent their ever doing so. Thus you endeavour to wrap yourself in darkness, and, in order to prove infant-baptism, abandon all medium of proof either *pro* or *con*. Those children that survive their infant state, and appear unbelievers,

ers, you have nothing to do with, for two reasons; first, because they did not die in infancy; and secondly, because adult children are not infants, as you inform us afterwards. But all these little *Hocus Pocus* tricks are easily detected, and serve only to shew the weakness of your cause.

I have been the longer on this point, as it is your *dernier resort*, whither you fly for refuge upon every pinching occasion; it may be called your *favourite depth*, or the great *whirlpool* of your whole controversy.

Before I conclude this letter, I would beg you seriously to consider, That as we have no warrant from scripture to reckon particular infants with the believing or the unbelieving, and so to determine their state merely from the judgment we form of their parents; so the scripture is very express, that God, from all eternity, hath elected some to everlasting life; and it is enough for us to know that the elect shall obtain salvation, whether they die young or old; have believing or unbelieving parents; be baptized in water, or unbaptized. Salvation is of sovereign free grace, and takes place not according to our age, situation, or connections in life; but according as we are chosen in Christ before the world began, and the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. Thus in the case of Esau and Jacob, *the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;*

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it was said, *The elder shall serve the younger.* As it is written, *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? Far be it. For he saith to Moses, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.* So then, it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy, Rom. ix. 11,—16. Thus it appears inconsistent with the sovereignty and freedom of divine grace, to hinge the salvation of infants upon their connection with believing parents; as, on the other hand, to suppose a necessity for the children of infidels their being adults before they are capable subjects of it. and it is no less inconsistent with this rich grace to suppose, that any of its objects will ever fall away. With great propriety then may the Christian sing;

- ‘ Magnificent free Grace, arise,
- ‘ Outshine the thoughts of shallow man;
- ‘ Sov’reign, preventing, all surprise
- ‘ To him that neither will’d nor ran :
- ‘ Grand as the bosom whence thou flow’d,
- ‘ Kind as the heart that gave thee vent,
- ‘ Rich as the Gift that God bestow’d,
- ‘ And lovely like the Christ he sent.
- ‘ Know then, on no precarious ground
- ‘ Stands’ this rich ‘ grace and life to men;
- ‘ For life now reigns in God’s dear Son,
- ‘ For us by’ divine ‘ justice slain.’

*Christian Songs, p. 5, 13.*

I am your, &c.

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## LETTER IV.

S I R,

**Y**OUR next argument for infant-baptism is drawn from the apostles' *baptizing believers and their houses*, and runs thus ;

‘ The apostles, in executing their commission, preached salvation in Christ to a man and his house.’——

*Ans.* They did so; for Cornelius said unto Peter, *We are ALL here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* Acts x.

33. so Peter preached salvation in Christ to them ALL. Likewise, with respect to the jaylor and his house, it is said, *And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to ALL that were in his house.* And they could do no less; for they had a commission to preach the gospel to every creature. Thus far then we agree.

——‘ And, according to this preaching, he that believed on Christ for his own salvation, believed on him also for the salvation of his house; for so his belief answered to that which was preached.’——

Here is *appropriation* with a witness! Whatever improprieties the popular preachers are guilty of  
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in their calls to the *appropriating act of faith*, they never, that I could learn, extended the saving benefit thereof beyond the person's self; but, according to you, a man is not only warranted to *appropriate* salvation to himself, but also to his whole house. If we look into the subject of the apostles' preaching, we shall find, that it did not respect any particular man's person or house; but was a declaration of the free grace of God to sinners, through the merits, atonement and resurrection of his Son Jesus Christ; and that whosoever believed this should be saved: but it was no part of their preaching, that a believer's house would be saved upon his faith without believing themselves; and therefore, such a belief was not required of any, nor could it any way answer to that which was preached.

You endeavour to prove, that the apostles preached salvation to a man's house if he *alone* believed, from the following scriptures;—*who shall tell thee words whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. Acts xi. 14. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house. Acts xvi. 31.* Here you cull out broken and detach'd sentences in order to avoid the connection, and then perch upon the sound of the words instead of the sense. But it happens very unluckily for your purpose, that we are expressly told these houses believed *themselves* as well as their owners.

The first passage relates to Cornelius and his house, concerning whom we are told, that he was

*one that feared God with ALL his house.* Acts x. 2. He and ALL his were present to hear Peter's sermon, (ver. 33.) in which there was not the least intimation, that his house would be saved upon his believing; but the apostle having set before them Christ's life, death and resurrection, he concludes thus; *To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth on him, shall receive remission of sins.* ver. 43. Then it follows; *While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on ALL them that heard the word,* ver. 44. Now, what can we gather from this, but that remission of sins is granted to all that *believe*; and that the household of Cornelius believed and received the Holy Ghost as well as himself? And was not this the exact accomplishment of what the angel had said to Cornelius concerning the words whereby he and all his house should be saved?

The other passage relates to the jailor and his house. In answer to the question, *What must I do to be saved?* it is said, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* Acts xvi. 31. This by no means implies, that the jailor's faith would save his house, or that he was commanded to believe for the salvation of his house as well as for his own; but only, that his house would be saved, as well as he, believing on Christ: and this sense is clearly ascertained by the event; for *they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house,* ver. 32. But why to ALL that were in his house, if he could have believed  
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in their stead? That all his house, as well as himself, understood and believed the word which was preached to them, is clear from ver. 34. — *he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with ALL his house.* Thus we see how the jaylor and his house were saved. But you proceed;

— And it is no less evident that they baptized the believer and his house: Thus Paul says, 1 Cor. i. 16. *And I baptized also the household of Stephanas.* And it is said of Lydia, Acts xvi. 15. *And when she was baptized and her house;* and of the jaylor, ver. 33. *he was baptized, he and all his.*

It is indeed no less evident that these houses you instance were *baptized*, than it is that they *believed*. But the point to be proven is, whether infants or others in these houses were baptized upon the faith of the parent. Unless you can make this appear, the baptism of these houses makes nothing for your purpose.

The baptism of the household of Stephanas will not prove this; for the apostle gives the following account of that household, *I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints) that ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us and laboureth.* 1 Cor. xvi. 15, 16. Here it is evident they were adults, since otherwise they could not minister to the saints, or help and labour with the apostles. This is further manifested by

their being the first-fruits of Achaia, concerning which we read, — *and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized.* Acts xviii. 8. These three words express the beautiful order which the apostles observed in executing their commission; they first preached, and when those who *heard, believed*, they then, and not till then, *baptized* them.

The baptism of the household of Lydia makes nothing at all for your purpose, unless you can make it appear she had infants, and that they were baptized upon her believing; but this, I imagine, you will not undertake; nor will the scripture account of her and her house admit this supposition; *And a certain woman, named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized and her house, &c.* Acts xvi. 14, 15. From hence it would appear, either that she never was married, or that her husband was then dead; for she seems to be chief manager in the business of selling purple; besides, it is not usual in scripture to denominate a household by the wife, whilst she is clothed with a husband: it is most natural then to think she had no infant-children to be baptized. But making the supposition of her having a husband, and children that were infants; (which cannot be proven) is it to be imagined, she would bring these infants along with her all the way from Thyatira in Asia, the place of her residence,



residence, to Philippi in Macedonia, where she appears to have come with design of selling her purple? In ver. 40. it is said, *And they (viz. Paul and Silas) went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia; and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them and departed.* Now as we read of no *brethren* in that city, but the households of Lydia and of the jaylor, so their being *comforted* of Paul and Silas, shews them to be adults and not infants.

Nor will the baptism of the jaylor's house avail your plea; for as it is said, that, believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, he and all his house should be saved; and that *he and all his were baptized*; so likewise we are told, that *they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to ALL that were in his house, prior to their baptism*; and that *he rejoiced, believing in God with ALL his house.* ver. 32, 34. Now, Sir, can you tell me why the word *ALL* may not be as comprehensive in the latter as in the former? If the jaylor had any infants, they are either excluded from the *ALL* that were *baptized*, else they must be included in the *ALL* that *heard* the word, *believed* and *rejoiced*; which last, I think, no rational man will affirm.

Here I would ask, What do you mean by a believer's *house*? Is it made up of infants, or of adults, or of both? If it includes both, then a believer's wife and adult children are saved by his faith, and so may be baptized, upon this footing, as well as his infants. If you say, it includes only infants,

upon

upon what scripture do you ground this distinction? Did not Abraham's house include adults as well as infants; servants as well as sons; those bought with his money, as well as those sprung from his body? And was not circumcision expressly injoin'd, and actually administered to them all? Gen. xvii. 12, 13, 24, 25, 26, 27. Does not the apostle term these adult persons who ministered to the saints, *the house of Stephanas*? Who would ever imagine, that the saints of Cesar's *household*, who sent their salutations to the church at Colosse, were only a nursery of sucklings? Col. iv. 22. Yet this must be supposed, if your argument have any consistency; else it will follow, that adults as well as infants; infidels as well as believers; wife as well as children; servants as well as sons, must every one of them be baptized upon the single profession of the parent or master; for they are all included in the scripture use of the word *household*.

You conclude your first section by saying, 'If we deny scripture example for baptizing of infants, we must first deny there were any infants in these baptized houses. And as we can plead no foundation in scripture for that, it is too bold to say, that there is no scripture example for baptizing infants.'

Whether, from what has been said above, it appears most agreeable to the scope of these scriptures, to say there were, or were not infants in these baptized houses, I leave you to consider at your leisure: but if ever you should attempt to prove there were  
 infants

infants in these houses, (which it concerns you much to do) I hope you will guard against all future objections, by proving they also *believed* and were baptized. Meantime, I despair of either of these being done in a hurry, and therefore still affirm with boldness, that there is no scripture example for baptizing infants. I am,

SIR,

Your, &c.

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## L E T T E R V.

S I R,

**I** Now proceed to consider your second section, which shews, *that infants must partake of baptism from their having part in the promise of the Holy Ghost unto which Christians are baptized; and proceeds thus;*

‘ We see in the very first call to those in Jerusalem to repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, the promise of the Holy Ghost, unto which they were baptized, was to them and to their children; even them who had said, *His blood be on us, and on our children.* Peter said to them, Acts ii. 38, 39. *Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you (who are presently called,) and to your children (who are connected with you in the condemnation,) and (in like manner as to you and your children, so also) to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* For as that promise of the Holy Ghost was to as many as the Lord then called in Jerusalem, and to their children; so it must be to as many as the Lord  
‘ calls

‘ calls afar off from thence, and to their children.  
 ‘ Now if they who repent be baptized unto the pro-  
 ‘ mise of the Holy Ghost, Acts xix. 2, 3. and if  
 ‘ that promise unto which they are baptized, be  
 ‘ to their children as well as unto them; then cer-  
 ‘ tainly baptism, as far as it is connected with that  
 ‘ promise, must belong to their children as well as  
 ‘ to them.’

It would be a sufficient answer to all this to shew, that this promise of the Holy Ghost was made to their children just as it was made to themselves, viz. to as many of them as should *repent* and be *called* of the Lord; for to such the apostle restricts the promise. However, I shall consider more particularly,

1. The promise itself. 2. To whom it was made.

1. The promise which Peter had particularly in his eye is that in Joel ii. 28, 29, 30, 31, 32. *And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants, and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens, and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered; for in mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliver-*  
 ance,

*ance, as the Lord hath said, and in the remnant whom the Lord shall call.*

This prophecy or promise may be considered either,

1. In a literal limited sense ; or, 2. In a more general and extended sense.

1. In its literal and limited sense, it is an Old Testament promise of the Spirit, which was fulfilled in the apostolic age ; as is evident from the miraculous signs which were to attend it, such as their sons and daughters prophesying, the wonders to be shewn in the heavens, &c. and it was likewise to take place before the great and terrible day of the Lord came in the destruction of the Jewish church and state, foretold by our Lord, Matth. xxiv. Mark xiii. and Luke xxi. Yea, the apostle expressly applies it to that extraordinary effusion of the Spirit which began on the day of Pentecost, *This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel*, Acts ii. 16. and then cites the passage. You may likewise see how it is applied in *The Testimony of the King of Martyrs*, p. 57. near the foot.

Peter in his sermon proceeds to shew, in what manner that promise in Joel came to be accomplished, ver. 22,—37. viz. That God having raised that same Jesus whom they had crucified (according as it was foretold by David in the sixteenth Psalm,) and being by the right-hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Spirit he had shed forth that which they then saw and heard.

Now

Now these gifts of the Spirit, which were then seen and heard by the multitude, were miraculous and extraordinary, and behoved to cease when they had reached their end, 1 Cor. xiii. 8. And as the promise, in this sense, will not apply to infants, so the apostle could mean no more by the words *your children*, than what the promise itself plainly expresses, *viz. your sons and your daughters shall prophesy*, &c. Nor is it clear, that the apostle applies this promise to any other than the Jews and their children; for he had not as yet learned, that the gentiles should *receive the promise of the Spirit thro' faith*. But,

2. We may consider this promise of the Spirit in a more *general* and *extended* sense, *viz.* That gift of the Spirit which is absolutely necessary for the regeneration and sanctification of all the people of God in all ages of the world, and which is bestowed upon all that are Christ's, Rom. viii. 9. But how will it apply, in this sense, to all the natural seed of believers? That elect infants may receive the Spirit, I make no doubt; but that all the natural seed of believers obtain this, is manifestly false, and contrary both to scripture and experience. Even those infants who receive the Holy Ghost cannot be distinguished from these who do not, and so cannot be the subjects of baptism, which does not belong to them immediately as elect, or as having the Spirit, but as *evidencing* this in the profession of their faith.

If the promise of the Holy Ghost be made to all

the children of believers, then it will either be accomplished, or not. If it be not accomplished, how can we reconcile this with the character of God, as a God of truth and faithfulness with whom it is impossible to lie? If this promise be actually made good, then none of believing Abraham's posterity could ever have been rejected; for as he had the Spirit himself, so all his natural children, yea, his children's children to the latest posterity, must also have the Spirit, otherwise the promise would fail whenever the succession of this gift was interrupted. But the New Testament demonstrates that the greater part of Abraham's natural seed were destitute of the Spirit and rejected, whilst at the same time it shews, that God's word of promise to Abraham has taken effect, Rom. ix. 6. Experience also shews us that the gift of the Spirit is not hereditary under the New Testament, and that many godly parents have wicked children, which could never be the case had God engaged himself by promise to give them his Holy Spirit. You yourself own †, that the children 'may yet be 'really irregnate, and when adult appear to be 'so;' and that 'if the children become adult, not 'adhering to the baptismal profession, they have 'no more the character of holy \*.' Now certainly you will not affirm, that irregnate and unholy persons have the Spirit.

If it should be said, that the promise is conditional, and so may justly be suspended till the condition be performed; then it will follow, that no

infants



heart, we must esteem these brethren that have the apparent characters of such; but if we be deceived in infants, they can have no hand in this deception, and consequently it must land upon the rule that directs our judgment of them: and I am rather inclined to father such a rule upon you than upon the scriptures of truth, as I am sure

‘The faithful true witness will never deceive.’

3. If all the infants of believers are ‘members of Christ’s church for which he gave himself, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word;’ then they shall all certainly be saved; for as the church you mention is the same with the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven, Heb. xii. 23. and as Christ gave himself for this church; so none of its members can ever perish or be plucked out of Christ’s hands.

4. But if ‘those little children whom the Lord declares to belong to his kingdom, in distinction from the world,’ fall away in their adult state, as you suppose some of them may §, then a person may be a real member of Christ for a while, and afterwards a child of the devil; enrolled in heaven in the former part of his life, and, in the latter part of it, blotted out of the book of life. And if any one of these perish for whom Christ gave himself, why may not all of them? Upon this scheme, what ground has any to hope that all other blessings will be bestowed in consequence of the

*the gift of Christ?* Was the apostle really out of his logic when he argues, *He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?—Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?* If the people of God must not look upon the gift of God as eternal life thro' Jesus Christ, what foundation is left for their hope, unless it be a conceit of something distinguishing about themselves (the work and labour of love, if you please) and after all, who can trust his own heart?

It might likewise be shewn how this scheme militates against the doctrine of election, effectual calling, the stability of the covenant, and the faithfulness of God. And tho' I am far from thinking you intended any such thing; yet, upon reflection, you might easily see, that the shifts you are put to in support of infant-baptism throw the whole fabric of redemption into rubbish and confusion.

Must we then part with all these rich, sweet and refreshing doctrines to make way for infant-baptism? Must we give up with plain scripture truths, to make room for dubious consequences drawn from undefined phrases? Sad exchange indeed!

I shall now consider the scope of 1 Cor. vii. 14.

It is evident from the first verse of this chapter, that the Corinthians had written to the apostle for a resolution of some doubtful cases, amongst which, by the apostles answer, this seems to have been one,

one, *viz.* Whether it was lawful for a believer, join'd in marriage with an unbeliever, to continue in that relation? Whether this doubt arose from a mistaken regard to Moses' law, Deut. vii. 3. and the example in Ezra, chap. x. or from what he had written to them before, 1 Cor. v. 9, 10. is not material to know. However, the apostle decides the matter thus, *If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.* Thus the matter stands determined by the apostle; to which he adds the following reason; *For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.* Ver. 12, 13, 14.

Two things offer themselves here to be considered.

1. The *sanctification* of the unbelieving party.
2. The *holiness* of the children in consequence thereof.

By the *sanctification* of the unbelieving party cannot be meant *internal sanctification*, or renovation of mind; for as the heart can only be purified by *faith*, the person, in that case, would be no longer an *unbeliever*. Neither can we understand it of *typical* or *ceremonial sanctification*; for this belonged only to the first covenant, which was then made old. There remain only two senses in which this

sanctification of the unbelieving party can be understood;

1. *Instrumental sanctification*; or sanctified as an instrument of propagating a holy seed. Or,

2. *Matrimonial sanctification*, whereby the one is enjoyed as a chaste yoke-fellow by the other, without fornication or uncleanness.

The former of these senses you hold, in which you follow Mr. THOMAS GOODWIN; but that sense will not at all answer the apostle's purpose, which was to persuade the believing Corinthians to abide in their marriage relation with unbelievers. For,

1. If the unbelieving wife (for instance) were barren, then she could have no sanctification; for as this sanctification is not for herself, but for the children, in whom it terminates, how can it exist at all if she has none?

2. Though the unbelieving wife should bring forth children; yet if these children should lose the character of holy in their adult state, in what sense can we understand the unbelieving wife sanctified to bring forth holy children? The sanctification is not in herself, she being an unbeliever; neither is it in her children, they being irregenerate. Where then is it to be found? Thus, you see, the apostle's argument would be founded upon something very contingent and uncertain, and would have left the believing Corinthians, in many cases, at liberty to put away their unbelieving correlates.

But it is evident the apostle's argument was not  
found-

spiritual seed of Abraham. This distinction is copiously handled by the apostle Paul in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians, in which he always recurs back to the covenant made with Abraham. This covenant was of a mixt nature, as appears by the promises which it contain'd. For,

1. Herein God gave to Abraham the promise of a *seed* in whom all nations should be blessed, Gen. xii. 3. and xxii. 18. and this seed was Christ, Gal. iii. 16. In this promise the gospel was preached unto Abraham, ver. 8. and in it lay the object of that faith whereby he and his spiritual seed among Jews and gentiles were blessed with him, ver. 7, 9. This is that promise which was confirmed of God in Christ, and which the law could not disannul, or make of none effect, ver. 17. But because God design'd to exhibit by, and among Abraham's fleshly seed an earthly pattern or exemplar of the heavenly things contained in this promise; therefore,

2. He made another promise to Abraham in that covenant, *viz.* That he would multiply him exceedingly, and give unto him, and to his seed after him, the land of Canaan, Gen. xvii. 2, 8. This promise was temporal, and behoved to be accomplished before the other, as it contained the types and pledges thereof. Canaan typified the heavenly inheritance; so the patriarchs understood it, Heb. xi. 8,——15. and Abraham's fleshly seed typified his spiritual seed of all nations, Gal. iii. 7, 8, 9. even the children of the spiritual promise, who walk in the steps of Abraham's faith. The difference

difference betwixt these two seeds was typified to Abraham by Ishmael and Isaac in his own family, even as the two covenants were typified by Hagar and Sarah, Gal iv 21. Now these two promises laid the foundation of a twofold relation to God; the one spiritual and eternal with Abraham's spiritual seed; the other typical and temporal, betwixt God and Abrahams fleshly seed, which behoved to continue during the period of the typical œconomy, and no longer.

3. The ordinance of circumcision belonged only to the temporal promise, and the temporal typical relation betwixt God and Abraham's seed according to the flesh: for though the covenant to which it belongs be called an *everlasting covenant*, Gen. xvii. 13. yet this must be understood with the same limitation, as the earthly Canaan, promised therein, is called an *everlasting possession*, ver. 8. and xlviii. 4. the Aaronical priesthood, an *everlasting priesthood*, Exod. xl. 15. and the yearly typical atonement an *everlasting statute*, Lev. xvi. 34. These temporal types are called *everlasting* in relation to the antitype, in which this epithet holds true.

Circumcision is indeed called, *a seal of the righteousness of the faith*; but it was a seal only to Abraham of his own faith, even the faith which he had before circumcision. This seal he received in his peculiar patriarchal capacity, and that only as father of the faithful; for the apostle says; Rom. vi. 11, 12. *He received the sign of circumcision; a seal of the*

*the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised: (for what end?) that he might be the father (of whom? of all his fleshly circumcised seed? No: but) of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised;—and the father of circumcision to them (of his natural seed) who are not of the circumcision only, but also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham which he had being yet uncircumcised.* i. e. That he might be the father of all that believe, whether circumcised or uncircumcised. Now if Abraham was not a father to his natural seed, *as such*, in that respect wherein circumcision sealed or confirmed to him the righteousness of his faith; then circumcision was not such a seal to his natural seed; nor could it be such a seal to infants at eight days old, who had not that faith before circumcision; but respected only the temporal promise and relation, which promise and relation had a typical reference to the eternal promise, and the spiritual relation arising therefrom.

When God proceeded to fulfil the temporal promise, he did it by means of a covenant, even that which he made with the whole nation of Israel, when he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, Exod. xix 3.—8. Heb. viii. 9. This is called the *old covenant* (Heb. viii. 13.) on account of the temporal relation betwixt the Lord and that nation, which is now done away.—The *law*, (Heb. x. 1.) on account of the law therein given to them.—And the *first testament*, (Heb. ix. 15.) on account

count of the typical adoption, and the temporal inheritance.

It is evident that this covenant, and all its typical œconomy, was founded on the temporal promise made to Abraham concerning his fleshly seed; for all the temporal blessings which Israel enjoyed according to the tenor of the Sinaitic covenant, are also ascribed to that promise. The Lord refers to it when about to give the typical redemption, *Exod. vi. 3,—8.* Their manifold deliverances from the surrounding nations are ascribed to it, *2 Kings xiii. 23. Neh. ix. 7, 8.* and pled from it, *2 Chron. xx. 7.* Yea, their typical relation to God as his people, whercin the very essence of this covenant consisted, is originally attributed to that same promise, *Deut. xxix. 13.* As circumcision belonged to the temporal promise and fleshly relation, it was also ingross'd into this covenant, *Lev. xii. 3.* and so behoved to vanish away with the covenant itself, and all its other typical ordinances.

When the fulness of the time was come, and God proceeded to fulfil the spiritual promise, he did it by means of another covenant, (by the mediation of Christ) with Abraham's spiritual seed of all nations. This is called the *new covenant*, (*Heb. xii. 24.*) in reference to the other, which was made old, and the new spiritual relation betwixt God and that new nation, made up from among all nations, kindreds and tongues.—The *new testament*, (*Heb. ix. 15.*) on account of the true adoption and the heavenly inheritance, of which Christ the first-born is both testator and heir.

These



These are the two covenants of which the apostle speaks in Gal. iv. and Heb. viii. and ix. chapters, and which were both included, by way of promise, in the covenant made with Abraham. The contrast may be more fully stated in the following manner :

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

*Old Covenant.*

*New Covenant.*

1. The old covenant was only a *temporal* relation betwixt God and a particular nation, which is now *done away* and come to an end. Heb. viii. 13.

1. The new covenant is an *eternal* relation betwixt God and his people from among all nations, and is therefore called an *everlasting covenant*, Heb. xiii. 20.

2. The old covenant was *carnal* and *earthly* :

2. The new covenant is *spiritual* and *heavenly* :

(1.) In its *worship*, which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, Heb. ix. 10.

(1.) In its *worship*, which requires a true heart, faith, and a good conscience, and to be perform'd in spirit and in truth. Heb. x. 19,—23. John iv. 23.

(2.) In its *sacrifices* of bulls and of goats, which could never take away sin, or purge the conscience, Heb. ix. 9. and x. 4.

(2.) In its *sacrifice*, which is Christ, and which perfects for ever them that are sanctified, Heb. x. 14.

## ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

*Old Covenant.*

(3.) In its *mediator*,  
viz. Moses. Gal iii. 19

(4.) In its *priests*, viz.  
Aaron and his sons, who  
were sinful men, and  
not suffered to continue  
by reason of death.  
Heb. vii. 23, 28.

(5.) In its *sanctuary*,  
which was worldly and  
made with hands, Heb.  
ix. 1, 24.

(6.) In its *promises*;  
they being carnal bless-  
ings in earthly places,  
and respecting only a  
prosperous life in the  
earthly Canaan, Deut.  
xxviii. 1,—15; Isai. i.  
19. Josh. xxi. 43, 45.  
chap. xxiii. 14, 15, 16.

(7.) In its *subjects*, or  
people covenanted; they

*New Covenant.*

(3.) In its *mediator*,  
viz. Christ Jesus, Heb.  
xii. 24

(4) In its *priest*, viz.  
Christ, who is holy harm-  
less, &c. and abideth  
priest continually, ever  
living to make interces-  
sion for us, Heb. vii. 24,  
25, 26.

(5.) In its *sanctuary*,  
which is heaven itself,  
whereinto our great  
high-priest hath entered,  
having obtained eternal  
redemption for us, Heb.  
ix. 12.

(6.) In its *promises*;  
they being spiritual bless-  
ings in heavenly places,  
and chiefly respecting the  
life to come, and the en-  
joyment of the heavenly  
inheritance. Eph. i. 3.  
Tit. i. 2. Heb. viii. 6.  
and xi. 16.

(7.) In its *subjects*;  
they being the spiritual

ABRA-

ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

*Old Covenant.*

being the fleshly seed of Abraham, children of the temporal promise, related to God as his typical people, and to Christ as his kinsmen according to the flesh: which typical and fleshly relation availed them much for the enjoyment of the typical and earthly privileges of this covenant: but as Hagar, the bond-woman, was cast out with her son born after the flesh; so the covenant itself being antiquated, its temporal, typical privileges vanished, its subjects were cast out and disinherited; the fleshly relation upon which they receiv'd circumcision, availed nothing for their partaking of spiritual privileges, nor were they, as children of this covenant, admitted heirs with the

*New Covenant.*

seed of Abraham, typified by the fleshly seed; being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; predestinated unto the adoption of children, and redeemed by the blood of Christ. These are the children of the promise, who, in God's appointed time, are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, even by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever: who have the law of God written in their hearts, and all know him from the least to the greatest. Through this work of the Spirit, they believe in the name of the Son of God, and by the profession of this

## ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

*Old Covenant.*

children of the free woman, or new covenant. Rom. ix. 4,—9. Gal. vi. 15. and iv. 22,—31.

*New Covenant.*

their faith, they appear to be the seed of Abraham, children of the free woman, and heirs according to the promise, to whom belong all spiritual privileges, baptism among the rest. Eph. i. 4, 5. 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. John i. 13. 1 Pet. i. 23. Heb. viii. 10, 11. Gal. iii. 26, 29. and iv. 28, 31. Acts ii. 41, 42.

From this contrast it appears, that the old covenant made with the whole nation of Israel, and all the things established thereby, were only earthly patterns of things in the heavens, Heb. ix. 23. figures for the time then present, ver. 9. shadows of good things to come, chap. x. 1. impos'd upon the typical Israel, until the time of reformation, ch. ix. 10. under which they were shut up unto the faith that should afterwards be revealed, Gal. iii. 23. So that, abstract from their typical reference, there was nothing spiritual or heavenly in them.

And as this covenant was typical and earthly; so were the covenanted people. Nor was there any necessity of their being regenerated in order to their partaking of its privileges, seeing these privileges were earthly, and suited to men in a natural state:

state : but it was requisite they should be the fleshly seed of Abraham, observe the letter of the law, and have the sign of the covenant in their flesh by circumcision.

Though some of the fleshly Israel were likewise of the spiritual Israel; yet they were not so by their fleshly relation to Abraham, nor by the temporal promise concerning his natural seed, to which circumcision belonged; nor yet by the peculiar typical covenant at Sinai founded thereon: but by an election of sovereign grace, and faith in the notable S E E D of the new covenant, of which their fleshly relation and temporal covenant was but a type or earthly pattern. Rom. xi. 5, 7. Heb. xi. 13, 39, 40.

As type and antitype hold the same proportion with flesh and spirit, shadow and substance, earth and heaven, we must always keep this distinction in our eye, when running the parallel betwixt Abraham's twofold seed, else we will be apt to confound those born of the flesh, with these born of the Spirit. And in this, I perceive, your mistake lies: for your whole argument proceeds upon the supposition, that the fleshly seed of New Testament believers are as really the spiritual seed of Abraham as the infants of old Israel were his fleshly seed.

But it is absurd to suppose, that the infant seed of Abraham born of the flesh, did typify the infant seed of believers born likewise of the flesh; for this would be only one fleshly seed typifying another fleshly seed, and so would not answer to the  
distinc-

distinction that must always be held betwixt the type and its antitype. The beasts sacrificed under the law, were not typical of any other beasts to be sacrificed under the gospel; nor did the old covenant with the fleshly seed, typify, that the new covenant should be with another fleshly seed. Unless then we suppose, that shadow and substance, sign and thing signified, type and antitype, are of the same nature and kind, we must of necessity grant, That the natural seed of Abraham, *born of the flesh* according to the temporal promise, typified nothing less than his spiritual seed, *born of the Spirit* according to the new covenant promise.

As baptism belongs only to the spiritual seed of Abraham, it remains to be considered, what it is that distinguishes them from the world, and gives them a *visible right* to this ordinance.

The fleshly birth sufficiently distinguished the subjects of circumcision; for this was a thing visible, and the highest evidence that could be had of their being the fleshly seed of Abraham, to whom that ordinance belonged; so that Israelitish infants appeared as really to be the typical fleshly seed at their birth, as they could do in any after period of their lives. But this is far from being the case with the spiritual seed: for as regeneration is invisible; so the carnal birth, be it of whom it may, is no proper index of it, nor can they upon that footing receive baptism. Because,

I. That which is common both to the natural and spiritual seed can never distinguish the one from

from the other ; but the fleshly birth is common to both ; therefore it cannot distinguish them.

2. That which does not amount to the character of the sons of God, cannot denominate the spiritual seed ; but the being born of blood, of the will of the flesh, and of the will of man, (as are the infants of believers as well as others) does not amount to the character of the sons of God, John i. 13. Therefore, &c.

3. If the spiritual birth hath no necessary, natural, or fœderal connection with the fleshly birth, then from the fleshly birth we cannot infer the spiritual ; but the being born again—from above—of the Spirit—of God, is neither necessarily, naturally, nor fœderally connected with the fleshly birth ; therefore it cannot be inferr'd from it. Not *necessarily* ; for it is the fruit of sovereign free election. Nor *naturally* ; for we are by nature children of wrath. Nor *fœderally* ; for the new covenant is not with the natural offspring of believers, as the old temporal covenant was with the fleshly seed of Abraham ; nor are we now permitted to know any man after the flesh, 2 Cor. v. 16. or to judge of their spiritual state by their fleshly relation to covenanted parents.

4. The natural seed of believers can no more be counted for the spiritual seed, than the natural seed of Abraham ; but the apostle tells us, that the children of Abraham according to the flesh are not the children of God, nor counted for the seed.

5. Though some of the children of believers are  
of

of the spiritual seed, it will not follow they should all be counted so; any more than it will follow, that because some of the fleshly Israel were also of the spiritual Israel, therefore they were all of the spiritual Israel. And if they cannot all be counted for the spiritual seed, then none of them can; for, in infancy, there is no visible distinction betwixt them.

6. If the scriptures demonstrate, that many of the children of infidels are of the spiritual seed, whilst, on the other hand, multitudes of the seed of the faithful are rejected as infidels; then no rule can be fixt for judging of the state of infants from the faith or infidelity of their parents; but both scripture and experience demonstrate the former, as in the case of Ishmael, Esau, and Absalom, and in the rejection of the Jews, and conversion of the gentiles. Therefore, to judge of infants by the fleshly birth, or by the faith of their parents, is not according to scripture rule.

These arguments serve to shew, that the infants of New Testament believers cannot be counted for the spiritual seed, as the infants of old Israel were counted for the fleshly seed; and that therefore baptism cannot be administered to the former, as circumcision was to the latter, who were really the fleshly Israel, and appear'd to be so.

I shall only mention one thing more upon this part of the argument, *viz.* That there was a particular, express divine command for circumcising the fleshly seed at eight days old; but there is nei-

ther



ther command nor example in all the word of God for baptizing infants, or any but those who appear, by the profession of their faith, to be the spiritual seed.

I shall now follow you through the rest of this section.

——‘ For they [infants] are as capable of being ‘ born of the Spirit, as they are of being born of ‘ the flesh : ’——

*Answ.* Their *capability* is no argument. Are they all really born of the Spirit ? Does scripture declare it ? Does experience shew it ?

——‘ For who can deny the operation of God ‘ upon them, that raised Christ, and begets the ‘ adult to the faith, to which they contribute as ‘ little as their infants ? ’——

*Answ.* No one can deny, that *God can of these stones raise up children to Abraham* ; but you yourself own, that this operation is not actually exerted on all the infants of believers, just a little below, where you say, ‘ It is true, they may yet be ‘ really irregenerate, and when adult appear to be ‘ so.’ Scripture and experience both shew, that they are but the fewest number, even of the children of believers, upon whom this operation is exerted. How trifling and weak then is such reasoning, God is able to regenerate infants, therefore they may be baptized ! According to this argument, all the human race may be baptized ; for God is able to regenerate them.

——‘ When it is asked, how can infants appear ‘ to

‘ to be of the spiritual seed? it may then be asked,  
 ‘ how does a parent appear to be such an Israelite  
 ‘ upon the very first profession of his faith, by  
 ‘ which he is admitted to baptism? ’——

*Ans.* A parent appears to be a true Israelite upon his first profession, only in so far as there is ground to believe, that his profession agrees with the belief of his own heart, and is the index of it: but his profession can never make his infant appear to be of the spiritual seed; because there is no connection betwixt his profession and the spiritual state of his child, any more than there is betwixt the fleshly and spiritual birth. The parent does not profess the faith of his child, but his own faith; and it is certain, that nothing is made visible by a profession, but that which is professed in it. There is no such thing either express’d or imply’d in the scripture, as that infants appear to be the spiritual seed, by their being the natural seed of believers. Abraham had never this honour with respect to his natural seed, though his faith was tried and approved of by God the searcher of hearts: how then can we suppose, that professing gentiles should propagate spiritual children to Abraham by carnal generation, and manifest them such by professing the faith in their stead, when he who was the father of the faithful could do no such thing, unless we count the children of the flesh for the seed, contrary to Rom. ix. 8. Gal. iv. 29.? Abraham’s spiritual seed walk in the steps of his faith, Rom. iv. 11, 12. and do the works of Abraham,

John

John viii. 39. and thus appear to be the spiritual seed.

You say, 'the word of God calls us to acknowledge them the spiritual seed by the parent's profession.' Yet there is no such call in all the word, but rather the reverse: *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh*, John iii. 6. *They are not all Israel which are of Israel, neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children*, Rom. ix. 6, 7.

As for the parent's profession, it can never make his infants appear to be the spiritual seed, tho' it makes them appear the fleshly seed of a true Israelite: nor can it make them appear the children of *promise*, who are counted for the seed; for there is no particular promise made to believers (as was to Abraham) that they shall have a seed, and much less a *spiritual* seed. But as you seem to ground this assertion upon their being called *holy*, I refer you back to what has been already said on that head.

In the next paragraph you endeavour to shew, that the baptism of infants will not infer their being admitted to the Lord's supper:

1. Because they are not by this acknowledged as members of any visible church, to which that ordinance belongs; but only of Christ's true church, his body, which is invisible.

2. Because the examples of baptism in scripture always preceded adding to a church. And,

3. Because, in short, they must be capable personally to declare their purpose of heart to cleave

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unto

*Not to Believers indistinguishable*

unto the Lord in a church, before they can be admitted as members.

Now tho' I agree with you in saying, that the instances of baptism in scripture always preceded adding to a visible church, to whom the supper belongs; yet your arguments for infant-baptism, are as strong for admitting them to the supper: For if we esteem infants members of Christ's true church for which he gave himself, &c. why may they not be admitted as members of a visible congregation, which is a representation in miniature of that true church? Are they members of that true church where no unclean thing can enter; and can they not be admitted into a society where many hypocrites have, and still do enter? Do they all partake of the one New Testament altar, and can we refuse them the instituted sign of that altar, the Lord's supper? Is not this something like 'daring to exclude from the privileges of Christ's kingdom, and church communion those who appear to be of the truth?'

When it is asked, how can infants appear to be members of a visible church? It may then be asked, how does a parent appear to be such a member, upon the declared purpose of his heart to cleave unto the Lord in it, by which he is admitted as one? And when it shall be said, That the word of God calls us to acknowledge him as such by that declaration; then it shall also be said, (re-torting your own argument,) that the same word calls us to acknowledge his infants as such, by that same declaration.

But how, of all the world, come you to speak of qualifications in order to partake of the Lord's supper, call it a declared purpose of heart, &c. or what you will? Does not this lead us (according to you) to lay the stress of our salvation upon something that we do in the declaration of our purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord, and some holiness about us whereof infants are incapable?' p. 198. Thus I think you are fairly intangled in your own net; for if you once dispense with that personal profession which the scripture requires in order to baptism, you must likewise give up with that personal declaration requisite to church-fellowship and communion in the supper, notwithstanding of all your distinctions. But you proceed:

— 'Nor if we consider what is now said, (viz. against reckoning the baptized to be members of a visible church) shall we be able to ascribe the corruption of christianity to the baptism of christian infants, as it may be ascribed to the *making of Christians by baptism.*'

*Ans.* Your arguments for infant-baptism will equally hold for their receiving the supper, (as hath been shewn) both which are a corruption of christianity, as there is no foundation for any such practices in the scripture; and if these infants you would have baptized be not *made christians by baptism*, I am sure many of them are never made christians in any other way, as their after conduct glaringly demonstrates.

— 'The corruption of the christian religion  
H 2 came

‘ came by departing from the scriptural profession  
 ‘ of the faith upon which baptism was administered  
 ‘ from the beginning to a man and his house, and  
 ‘ by substituting another profession in the room of  
 ‘ it ; a profession that cannot intitle the professors  
 ‘ to the scriptural brotherly love as saints and  
 ‘ faithful in Christ Jesus ; or as the spiritual Is-  
 ‘ rael.’ ———

*Ans.* You say right : for to substitute any profession in the room of a personal one, as it is not scriptural, so it can never intitle to brotherly love as saints, and must consequently introduce great corruptions into the christian religion. So that I may safely challenge you or any man, to point out a sitter engine in all the compass of priest-craft, for advancing national churches or nominal christianity, than that of baptizing-infants without a scriptural profession, and by substituting the profession of another in its stead.

——— ‘ Whereas the true primitive profession of  
 ‘ the faith, gives the professor and his house the  
 ‘ character of holy and admits them to baptism :  
 ‘ And we see unfeigned faith descending from a  
 ‘ parent to her child and grandchild.’ 2 Tim.  
 i. 5.

*Ans.* I have considered the scripture doctrine concerning a believer’s *house* already, as also how his children are said to be *holy*, and have found that it makes nothing for your purpose : but to affirm, that ‘ unfeigned faith should descend from a parent to her child and grand child,’ is so gross a corruption of christianity, and such a manifest  
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wresting of the scripture, that I cannot tell what to say of a point which requires such absurd conceits to support it. The apostles words are, 2 Tim. i. 5: *When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.* Here it is evident the apostle does not mean, that faith descended from Timothy's grandmother to himself, by virtue of her being his grandmother; (for then it would descend like hereditary qualities in the blood) but only that Timothy was enlightened in the knowledge of the gospel by the Spirit of God, even as his mother and grandmother were before him; which might or might not be notwithstanding the fleshly connection, as both scripture and experience plainly evince.

—— ‘If the children become adult, not adhering to the baptismal profession, they have no more the character of holy; but then they are no more the infants of believing parents.’ ——

*Ans.* The scripture to which you refer for the character of *holy*, is as applicable to them when become adult, as when infants, and while unregenerate as when regenerated: ‘but then they are no more the *infants* of believing parents.’ Very right, Sir, *adults* are not *infants*; thus far you have discovered truth: but pray, Sir, are not *adults children* in scripture stile, though they be not *infants*? Whether does the place you refer to mention *infants* or *children*? Does a believers house include none but *infants* in distinction from *adult*

children? And whether is this a scriptural distinction, or an imagination of your own brain? How come you then, without a scripture warrant, to divest them of the character of *holy* upon any consideration, as long as they are the *lawful* children of believing parents?

But though their adult state should discover your error as to the *nature* of that holiness, you are very far from owning it as yours; for you say, ‘according to the scripture, we must look upon the children of believing parents, dying in infancy, as dying in the Lord.’ Strange! that you should father such fancies upon the scriptures of truth, when there is not one syllable in all that sacred book that makes the least distinction (with respect to salvation) betwixt those who die in infancy, and those who arrive at maturity. But as you were before obliged to use the distinction of *visible* and *invisible* church, to cut of the connection betwixt baptism and the Lord’s supper; so you are here forced to use the distinction of *infant* and *adult*, to support the credit of that imaginary *holiness*, which you say intitles infants to baptism, but vanishes away in their adult state like a morning cloud which is dispell’d by the rising sun.

Upon the whole, had you entirely dropt the apostolic distinction of the two covenants and adopted the popular plan of their *identity*, you might have handled the argument from circumcision more consistently than you have done.

I am, SIR, Your, &c.

LET



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## LETTER VIII.

S I R,

I Shall now proceed to your fifth section, which shews, *that the apostles minding the Lord's admonition as to infants, and primitive Christians long after them, did not scruple upon baptizing them; and that it was the practice in the first ages.*

In the first part of this section you recapitulate your former arguments; and take it for granted they are conclusive; but as I have answered them already, I shall not stay here upon every particular. You begin thus;

‘ If we believe Christ faithful as a son over his own house, we must take the revelation of his mind and will as he is pleased to give it, without prescribing to him the manner in which he should make his will known.’ —

*Ans.* We are willing to take the revelation of Christ's mind as he has been pleased to give it; but since infant-baptism has never yet appeared to be any part of that revelation, you must excuse us though we do not follow those who take it from you as you are pleas'd to give it; for it is Christ's will and not yours we chuse to regard in this matter. But what connection has the faithfulness of Christ

Christ with infant-baptism? Do they stand or fall together? Or does the denial of the latter, imply a disbelief of the former? Or do you think that the obscurity of the revelation about infant-baptism affords ground to question his faithfulness? If so, let you and your brethren see to it, who have given occasion for such doubts: as for us, we still maintain, that the revelation of Christ's mind about baptism is clear, express and particular, and so have no ground to question his faithfulness on that account.

—— ‘ When the same temper from which the  
 ‘ scruples at infant-baptism now proceed, shewed  
 ‘ itself in his disciples, he was much displeased at  
 ‘ it: The disciples rebuked those who brought  
 ‘ infants to him, and their reasons for this could  
 ‘ be no other but such as are still used by those  
 ‘ who forbid them baptism.’ ——

*Ans.* If Christ's disciples, (who even then baptized more than John, John iv. 1, 2.) had it in commission to baptize infants, as, according to you, behov'd to be the case; then their reasons could not be the same with ours, who maintain they had no such commission. Or if you imagine the disciples thought infants incapable of Christ's blessing, and so forbade them to be brought, I hope you will not affirm that this is any of our reasons for withholding their baptism. Wherein then do our reasons agree with those of the disciples?

—— ‘ And in the foresight of their self-righte-  
 ‘ ous

ous and unmerciful principle touching infants; forbidding them the first sign of union with him and his church, out of which there is no salvation, and perverting the scriptures that shew their church membership, he said, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.* And he took them up in his arms, put his hands on them, and blessed them. Thus he secured the church membership of infants before his institution of baptism, and thus he prevented the disputes that have arisen since about infants; shewing himself as the first patron of their cause against disciples opposing their being brought to him.

*Answ.* Here you endeavour to represent the Baptists as self-righteous and unmerciful, and that because they deny baptism to infants: but there can be neither self-righteousness nor unmercifulness in denying what was never commanded to be given, and which when given, can be of no advantage to them any more than the Lord's supper. However, we need not be much alarmed at the epithet *self-righteous* when applied by you, as it is only one of your cant terms, which like Saul's javlin you often in a pet throw at random against the wall. As for what you say of our *unmercifulness* in forbidding infants the first sign of union with Christ and his church out of which there is no salvation; and of our *opposing* their being brought

*brought to Christ*, thought there be not the least argument in it; yet it serves to ply and stimulate the fondly feeling hearts of parents for their infants, and secure them by this blind handle to your side. You are sensible, that the generality of people are more influenced by sound than reason, especially in things that take hold of their passions and natural affections; and here you avail yourself of this weakness of human nature, by alarming parents with the unmercifulness and cruelty of denying their infants baptism; as if it were like dashing them against the stones, or depriving their souls of salvation. Methinks I see the fond parent drown'd in tears at the very thought.

You confidently affirm, that it was in the foresight of the denial of infant-baptism, that our Lord said, *Suffer the little children to come unto me*, &c. whereas our Lord neither enjoins nor exemplifies their baptism in this place, when there was an opportunity of doing both. But I shall consider the text more particularly.

*And they brought young children to him that he might touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.* Mark x. 13, 14.

Whether those who brought the little children were their parents or not, is not here said. Their end for bringing them, we are told here, and in Luke, was, *that he might touch them*; or, as Matthew hath

hath it, *put his hands on them and pray*: but there is no intimation of a desire they should be baptized.

Next we have the *opposition* of the disciples to their being brought. What their reasons were, we cannot tell. It is likely they were intent upon our Lord's discourse of marriage and divorce, and did not chuse he should be interrupted at that time, being, as they thought, better employed in teaching the multitude; not adverting, that our Lord could instruct by the example of a little child, as well as by any other similitude. But whatever were their reasons, our Lord corrects them, saying, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God, or, of heaven,* as Matthew hath it.

By *kingdom of God* cannot be understood any particular visible church; this you will readily grant. It must therefore be understood of Christ's true church for which he gave himself: and that elect infants are subjects of this kingdom, there can be no doubt; for no circumstances of age or parentage can hinder this. But then it must carefully be noticed;

1. That the children of infidels are as capable of being the subjects of this kingdom as the children of believers, for any thing contained in this text.

2. *All* the children of believers are no more the subjects of this kingdom, than *all* the children of unbelievers, as has been already shewn: how then can

can the subjects of baptism be distinguished among the children of believers? This place makes no distinction of children, either by their parents, or among themselves.

3. As the children of believers are not all of this kingdom; so many of those who are elected to it, are not *actually* called in infancy; but may spend a great part of their days in the course of this world. Thus Paul, though he was separated from his mother's womb; yet it did not please God to reveal his Son in him, till he was on his journey to Damascus. Now baptism does not immediately belong to the elect, *as such*, (for these are only known to God,) but as *actually called*, and *appearing* to be so.

4. Though Jesus Christ, as the great prophet of his church, can *distinguish* his people amongst infants, as well as amongst adults, and *bless* them; yet this is no warrant for us to bring the infants of believers *indiscriminately* to baptism, as it is to bring them to him for a blessing.

5. Our bringing them to Christ for a blessing, though a duty; yet it is his to give or withhold, according to his sovereign and righteous purpose; nor can we distinguish who obtain the blessing in infancy; and though we could, it would be no warrant for their baptism, without a divine command or example; for the blessing and baptism are not inseparably connected; as we may see in this place, where the children were blest'd without being baptized.

But if we look a little better into the text we  
may

may easily see, that our Lord by these words, of such is the kingdom of God, does not so much intend the persons of little children, as those who resemble them in dispositions, as is evident from the following words, *Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God AS a little child, he shall not enter therein.* And this sense is confirmed by a parallel passage, Mat. xviii. 2, 3. *Jesus called a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily, I say unto you, except ye be converted and become AS little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.* And adds, *Whosoever therefore shall HUMBLE himself AS this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.* And *whoso shall receive one SUCH little child in my name, receiveth me.* And *whosoever shall offend one of these little ones which BELIEVE in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.*

Here it is evident our Lord styles these *little children*, who are converted, and resemble such in *humility*, though they be adults in age; for they are described to be such little ones as *believe* in him, and are capable of being *offended*, scandalized or stumbled; and if we compare this with what the apostle says about offending the weak brother, Rom. xiv. and 1 Cor. viii. we shall find, that though it will not apply to infants, yet it is a necessary caution against offending Christ's *little ones*, or these who are weak in the faith.

Nor does this sense of the place make our Lord's phraseology any way uncommon; for it was his usual method to convey instruction by similitudes and metaphors, and to use the sign or metaphor for the thing signified, Thus he took bread, blessed it, and said, *This is my body*; and of the cup, *This is my blood of the New Testament*; or, *This cup is the New Testament in my blood*: So here, *Suffer little children to come unto me*; for of such is the kingdom of God. i. e. They bear an instructive resemblance of that humility, harmlessness and simplicity which become my subjects. And in as-much as he blessed them, we are warranted to bring our children to him for the same. But there is no more ground here for the baptism of infants here, than there is for bringing them to the Lord's supper. But you proceed:

‘The apostles kept this in mind when they executed his commission to them for setting up his kingdom in the world:’ —

*Ans.* They kept in mind that his commission to them was first to *teach* (or disciple) and then *baptize* those who were thus taught †.

—— ‘For

† The words, *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them*, &c. Mat. xxviii. 19. is indeed a commission to *teach all nations*; but not to *baptize all nations*; for baptism is restricted to the relative pronoun *αὐτοῖς*, *them*, which is of the masculine, and does not agree with *πάντα τὰ ἔθνη*, *all nations*, which is neuter; but to *μαθητεύετε*, *disciples*, which is included in the verb *μαθητεύετε* *teach*, or, *make disciples*. So the sense is, *Teach all nations, baptizing them that are taught or made disciples by teaching*.



—— ‘ For they took in the children with the  
‘ parents, as we have seen. ’ ——

*Answ.* They took in those who profess'd the  
faith, whether children or parents, as we have  
seen.

—— ‘ They preached salvation by Christ to  
‘ men and their houses ; ’ ——

*Answ.* They preached salvation by Christ to all  
that had an ear to hear, even to every creature.  
But what is this to the purpose ?

—— ‘ They baptized believers and their houses,  
‘ them and all theirs. ’ ——

*Answ.* They did so, when their houses believed  
as well as themselves ; for this was exactly agree-  
able to their commission.

—— ‘ And they left christian infants, as holy,  
‘ so in the possession of this privilege of Christ's  
‘ circumcision. ’ ——

*Answ.* They did not leave them holy in your  
sense of it ; but argued from the received princi-  
ple of their being legitimate, that the marriage of  
their parents behoved to be so likewise. Nor did  
they leave them in the possession of the privilege  
of Christ's circumcision, if by this you mean bap-  
tism ; for as they had not this in their commission,  
so we find they did not practise it in any of the  
instances we have of baptism in scripture : neither  
did they leave any directions about it. And if  
you can argue from Phil. i. 1. that there ought to  
be no officers in a christian church but *Bishops* and

*Deacons*, you cannot, with any good grace, hinder me to gather from Acts viii. 12. that none ought to be baptized but *believing men and women*.

Thus you finish your scripture arguments, in the handling of which you have been obliged to contradict yourself in every thing material : and if I were to judge of your real principles from your practice I would be led to think, that you hold infant-baptism independent of any arguments you have yet advanced : When you receive adult members into your society, who have been baptized in the church of Rome, or in the church of Scotland, (which you esteem little better,) you neither baptize them yourself, nor enquire whether they have been baptized according to what you esteem the scripture rule. With respect to their *parents*, you neither enquire into their faith, nor own them for believers or true Israelites. and so all the arguments drawn from the faith of the parent, salvation to a believers house, the promise being to him and his children, &c. are laid aside here. And as for *themselves*, you did not look upon them as disciples, believers, holy, and of the kingdom of heaven, until such time as they personally profess'd the faith, and apply'd for admission into your society. Thus all your scripture arguments are cut off at once; and therefore, since you hold such baptism valid, it must be upon some other foundation. What occasion, then, for all this wrangling, squeezing, and twisting of scripture to support a point which you can hold independent of it altogether? Had  
you

you been so ingenuous as to have confess'd this, it would have brought the controversy to a speedy issue; for then the only question would have been, whether or not the scripture be the *only* rule. 'Tis true indeed, you told in your first section, that you were obliged to depart from express precept and indisputable example; but who could ever imagine, that you would also practically depart from your own sophistical and wiredrawn consequences, and so abandon scripture altogether?

Here then is a *dilemma* from which there is no escaping. Either you must own, that you hold communion with unbaptized persons, or else ingenuously acknowledge, that your whole plea for infant-baptism is nothing but a mere parade; seeing you can dispense upon occasion with every argument you have adduced in its behalf.

I am,

S I R,

Your &c.

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## LETTER IX.

S I R,

**H**AVING followed you through your scripture authorities for infant-baptism, I shall, in this letter, make some reply to what you observe from ancient history. You say,

— ‘ That there was never any scruple moved about it till the end of the second century. ’ —

*Answ.* Because it had no being till about that time, as some of the most learned Pædobaptists, ingenuously confess †.

— ‘ And when we consider the opposition then made to it, we shall see how much it serves to confirm it. We shall see that christian infants were then in possession of the privilege of baptism, and that the first objection made to it arose out of a manifest departure from what the scripture teaches most plainly about baptism, as well as from the scripture doctrine of the grace of God. ’

*Answ.* If this manner of arguing be of any weight,

† See *Vanaleb's History of the church of Alexandria*, Part 1. c. 23. — *Ludovicus Vives* in his notes on *Augustin. de Civitate Dei*, B. I. c. 27. — *Suicerus* in his *Thesaur. Ec. sub Voce Συναξίς*. — *Curcellaus* in his *Relig. Christian. Institut.* Lib. 1. c. 12, and in *Dissert. secunda de Peccat. Orig.* Sect. 56.

weight, then it must recoil upon yourself with double force ; for it can easily be shewn, that the ancient arguments for infant-baptism were founded upon a suppos'd necessity of baptism to salvation ; that it washed away original sin ; that the grace of God must be denied to none ; and that the sins of infants were easier forgiven than those of adults, &c.

‘ Tertullian, who wrote in the conclusion of the second century, is the first that moves an objection against infant-baptism. ’ —

*Ans.* He was amongst the first that had occasion. — ‘ And he does this when pleading for the delay of baptism even to the adult : for he would have the unmarried professors of christianity to delay baptism, whether they be virgins or widows, till they either marry or be confirmed in their continency. He pleads for this delay of baptism from the prohibitions to lay on hands suddenly, and to give that which is holy to swine ; — and therefore he would have baptism delayed, according to the condition, disposition and age of each person. ’ —

*Ans.* It is not my business to defend Tertullian in all his notions ; but certainly the above scripture prohibitions were very much to his purpose against administering baptism to those who did not appear disciples by the scriptural profession of their faith.

— ‘ And he insists for the delay, especially as to infants, arguing for it in this manner, ‘ What necessity

“ necessity is there (says he) for bringing the  
 “ sponfors into danger, who being themselves mor-  
 “ tal, may fail of performing their promises, or  
 “ may be beguiled by the growth of an ill disposi-  
 “ tion ? The Lord indeed says. *Forbid them not*  
 “ *to come to me.* Let them come then when they  
 “ grow up ; let them come when they learn ;  
 “ when they are taught to what they should come.  
 “ Let them be Christians when they shall be ca-  
 “ pable to know Christ. Why does the innocent  
 “ age hasten to the remission of sins ? We would  
 “ act more cautiously in secular affairs : that to  
 “ whom the earthly inheritance is not given, the  
 “ divine should be intrusted ! Let them know to  
 “ seek salvation, that you may appear to have  
 “ given it to one that seeks.’ And for the delay  
 “ of baptism in general, he further says, ‘ If any  
 “ understood the weight of baptism, they would  
 “ rather fear the attaining of it, than the delay.  
 “ Entire faith is secure of salvation.’

‘ Now was not this delay of baptism as expressly  
 ‘ contrary to the scripture example as any thing  
 ‘ can be ? and did then the first opposition that we  
 ‘ hear of among Christians to infant-baptism, arise  
 ‘ out of the scriptures, or out of a plain contra-  
 ‘ diction to the plainest scriptures ? And did not  
 ‘ the objection of this forefather of the forbidders  
 ‘ of infants to come to Christ, proceed upon the  
 ‘ denial of original sin, and the need of remission  
 ‘ to infants ? And did it not plainly suppose, that  
 ‘ our salvation lies in that about us which distin-  
 ‘ guishes us from our infants ; and that it hinges  
 upon

‘ upon a knowledge and a seeking of salvation, and an  
 ‘ intireness of faith whereof infants are incapable ?  
 ‘ If it shall be alleged, that he was not in this a  
 ‘ forefather to those few commonly called *free-*  
 ‘ *grace Anabaptists*, who are only to be regarded  
 ‘ in this question : may we not then say, If these  
 ‘ indeed believe, that they cannot enter the king-  
 ‘ dom of God; but as the infants enter, he was  
 ‘ more consistent with himself than they ?’

*Answ.* Though I do not intend to justify Ter-  
 tullian in every thing; as it is a question whe-  
 ther the doctrine of original sin was clearly un-  
 derstood either by him or many of his contempora-  
 ries; yet I cannot help noticing that you most e-  
 gregiously wrest his words; as where you say, he  
 forbids infants to *come to Christ*, when he only for-  
 bids their *baptism*. Pray, Sir, have you not yet  
 learned to distinguish betwixt coming to *Christ*  
 and coming to *baptism*? Or do you think *baptism*  
 is *Christ*? Again where he says, ‘Entire faith is  
 ‘ secure of salvation,’ you consider him as main-  
 taining, that ‘our salvation lies in something  
 ‘ about us that distinguishes us from our infants;’  
 whereas he is only pleading for the delay of bap-  
 tism from its not being absolutely necessary to  
 salvation, (as was then alleged) that being con-  
 nected with faith, as we find, Mark xvi. 16. *He*  
*that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved;* in  
 which place, you own †, the stress is laid on be-  
 lieving, and not on *baptism*: so that unless you  
 place salvation in baptism, instead of Christ, and  
 faith

faith in his righteousness, your cavils are most disingenuous.

There are others of Tertullian's arguments which have never got a satisfying answer to this day; such as the danger of the sponsors; the necessity of first *teaching* the persons to be baptized to what they should come, and thus engaging them to desire baptism and seek for it, before they obtain it; in which he seems to refer to our Lord's commission, Mat. xxviii. 18.

But it seems the few commonly called *free-grace Anabaptists* are less consistent with themselves than Tertullian was. How so? Because 'they believe ' they cannot enter the kingdom of God but as the ' infants enter it,' and yet withhold baptism from their infants. But where in all the world, does this inconsistency ly? Have you yet shown these Anabaptists from scripture, that infants cannot enter the kingdom without baptism, or have the *thing signified* without the *sign*? Have you pointed out the *particular* infants that enter this kingdom in *distinction* from those who do not, and then shewn the scripture precept or example for baptizing such? And can you see no consistency at all in affirming, that many enter the kingdom of God, who never were proper or *visible* subjects of gospel ordinances? Once more; Do you think the profession of faith which the scripture requires in order to baptism, turns the professor's *entry into the kingdom of God* upon *another hinge* than the *entry* of infants, who cannot make that profession? If you do, then the inconsistency lies on your side of the question,



question, in requiring such a profession of the adult. But I refer you back to my second letter for a fuller answer on this head.

Now, Sir, as you have been so kind as to point out to the Baptists their original, it will not be amiss to draw your attention a little to that of the Pædobaptists.

That infant-baptism was very early introduced into the church, is evident from Tertullian's opposition to it about the latter end of the second century; but we have no authentic or distinct account of the grounds upon which it was held, till Cyprian's time, about the middle of the 3d century, who writes largely in favours of it in his epistle to Fidus, which epistle was the resolution of him and 66 bishops gathered together in council. The reasons for infant-baptism, (and that too before the eighth day) as exprest in that epistle, are as follow;

‘ That whereas none is to be kept back from  
 ‘ baptism, and the grace of God, much less new  
 ‘ born infants, who, in this respect, do deserve  
 ‘ more of our aid, and God's mercy; because in  
 ‘ the beginning of their birth they presently, crying  
 ‘ and weeping, do nothing else but pray.—The  
 ‘ mercy and grace of God is to be denied to none  
 ‘ that are born of man; for the Lord saith in the  
 ‘ gospel, that the Son of man came not to destroy  
 ‘ mens souls, but to save them; and therefore, as  
 ‘ much as in us lies, if it may be, no soul is to be  
 ‘ lost; and therefore all infants, at all times, are  
 ‘ to be baptized.—If any thing could hinder  
 ‘ from

' from obtaining of grace, greater sins should hin-  
 ' der men of years from it; now if greater sins  
 ' hinder not men of years from it, but that they,  
 ' when they believe, obtain forgiveness, grace, and  
 ' baptism, by how much rather is an infant not to  
 ' be forbidden, who being newly born, hath not  
 ' sinned, except in that being born carnally accord-  
 ' ing to Adam, he hath contracted the contagion  
 ' of antient death in his first nativity, who, in this  
 ' respect, comes more easily to receive remission of  
 ' sins, because not his own sins, but another's are  
 ' forgiven him.'

Now, tell me, was not this innovation of infant-  
 baptism as expressly contrary to the scriptures as a-  
 ny thing can be? And did the first arguments that  
 we hear of among Christians in its behalf arise out  
 of the scriptures, or out of a flat contradiction to  
 the plainest scripture?

Did it not proceed upon the doctrine of universal  
 grace; that baptism confers the grace of God;  
 that infants deserve this more than adults, as having  
 no sin of their own, but only Adam's, and there-  
 fore more easily forgiven; that they are eminent  
 in devotion, being continually praying in their  
 weeping and crying, &c. And what is this, think  
 you, but placing salvation in something else than  
 Christ?

If it shall be alledged, that he was not in this a-  
 forefather to the numerous nations of Protestant  
 Pædobaptists, who are only to be regarded in this  
 question: may we not then say, If these indeed be-  
 lieve that the salvation of infants lies *only* and *whol-*  
ly

ly in the *thing signified* to the adult in baptism, he was more consistent with himself than they. But to proceed regularly ;

About the latter end of the 2d century, an opinion arose, that without baptism there could be no salvation ; whether this error was founded upon a mistaken view of Mark xvi. 16. or John iii. 5. (which were pled afterwards) cannot well be determined. However, this principle being once admitted, (as appears from Tertullian's opposition) parents could not but take the alarm, and press hard for the baptism of their infants, lest they should die and be damn'd before they came to age. But there was one thing that stood in their way, viz. the inability of infants to make the scriptural profession of their faith before baptism : but alas ! their infants might perish ere they were capable for this profession, unless some expedient were found out to supersede it. What then could they do in this sad *dilemma*, but find cautioners or sponsors to profess and engage for their children ? For what signified the breach of a divine command, in comparison of the salvation of their infants ; These are the sponsors which Tertullian considers as brought into danger : but the parents were not then admitted as sponsors for their children, unless they abstain'd from the marriage-bed ever after : nor did they as yet baptize all infants, but only such as appear'd weakly and in danger of death §.

About fifty years after this, Cyprian and sixty-

K

six

§ Gregory Nazianzen. Orat. of Bapt.

six bishops gave it the sanction of a council: (for it had then become customary, when any piece of superstition was to be established in opposition to the scripture, to interpose the authority of a council for its more universal reception, though they wanted the civil power to put their decrees in execution.) We have already seen the resolution of this council and the judicious arguments upon which it was founded; and we may be sure they were no way inferior to those used in Tertullian's time, when infant baptism was first introduced: But it is evident that the arguments of modern Pædobaptists, were not as yet invented, at least those of them upon which they lay most stress.

We find likewise that in Cyprian's time they admitted infants to the Lord's supper, as appears from the story he relates of his giving the communion to an infant \*: and this practice continued in the church for 600 years, till it was at last rejected by the council of Trent; as is confess'd by *Maldonat* on John vi. Herein they were more consistent than the modern Pædobaptists, for their arguments are as strong for the one as for the other.

There is little account of infant-baptism from Cyprian's time, till the beginning of the fifth century, when we find Augustine strenuously maintaining it upon Cyprian's authority and principles, viz. That infants are damned by reason of original sin if they are not baptized; that baptism regenerates &c. But it is evident he paid no regard to the faith or intention of those who brought them

\* In his book *De Lapsis*, mentioned by Augustine, *Epist* 236

them to baptism; for he saith, in his 23d epistle to Bonifacius, ‘ Neither let that move thee that  
‘ some do not bring little ones to receive baptism  
‘ with *that faith* that they may be regenerated by  
‘ spiritual grace unto life eternal; but because they  
‘ think by this to preserve or receive temporal  
‘ health: for they are not therefore unregenerate;  
‘ because they are not offered by them with *this in-*  
‘ *tention*; for necessary ministries are celebrated by  
‘ them.’

Though they admitted sponsors to profess the faith; yet the sponsor was not to profess his *own* faith, but the faith of the child *itself*; which was done in this manner: The surety being asked, Doth the child believe? reply’d, He doth believe. Upon which Bonifacius urgeth Augustine to shew, how the sureties could be excused from lying in such an affirmation, and is answered, ‘ He doth  
‘ believe, by reason of the sacrament of faith.’ This wretched quibble may sufficiently convince you, that the argument of the parent’s faith was not then invented; but that they held *personal-faith* as a prerequisite to baptism, though they admitted a *vicarious profession* of it.

Augustine, as well as Cyprian, admitted infants to the Lord’s supper, and pled for it from John vi. 53. †.

But after all it would appear, that, even in Augustine’s time, infants neither received baptism nor the Lord’s supper but when they appear’d weakly, or in danger of death, and they were administered

as well for the health of their bodies, as for the salvation of their souls. Augustine's own baptism was deferred till he was upwards of thirty years of age, though educated as a Christian by his mother Monica; and he tells us, 'that being young, and 'falling sick, he desired, and his mother thought 'to have him baptized, but upon his recovery, it 'was deferred †' Nor was his own son baptized till he was fifteen, with many others that may be mentioned at that time.

Whoever considers the authority those forefathers of the Pædobaptists had in the church, and the mysticism, ignorance and superstition of those times, needs not wonder that these idle dreams should spread and be swallowed by whole nations; but it is surprising that it should be carried to the ridiculous length of baptizing whole kingdoms, upon the profession and baptism of their kings, though they still remained baptized infidels. If you say you have nothing to do with such a practice, I reply, that the baptism of whole houses upon the profession of the parent's faith, is perfectly analogous to this, and is nothing but a chip of the same block.

To conclude, as you have no foundation in scripture for infant-baptism; so, though you should rake the whole mire of antiquity, you will find little to support the modern plan of it, which stands chiefly upon conceits that have been hatch'd amongst Protestant Pædobaptists within these 300 years. I am, S I R, Your, &c.

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## LETTER X.

S I R,

**I** Now proceed to your APPENDIX, *which contains a dissertation on the manner of baptism and the scripture sense of the word Baptism.* Here you tell us,

‘ The opposers of infant-baptism contend likewise for a different manner of baptism from that which is commonly practised : which according to them cannot be called baptism : because it does not at all signify and represent union and communion with Christ in his death and burial by immersion, or plunging, or dipping in water ; nor in his resurrection, by emerging or rising up from under the water : and because it does not at all answer to the very sense and meaning of the word *Baptism*, which signifies dipping, immersing, or plunging.’

*Ans.* I suppose you will not deny that the word, βαπτίζω, baptize, primarily and properly signifies to immerse, plunge under, overwhelm, and also to dip ; and that where it is put for washing, it is used in a secondary, consequential, and more improper sense. If you deny this, you oppose not only the Baptists, but the best lexicographers

graphers and critics that have ever writ on the Greek language. But then it seems,

‘ This cannot appear from scripture to be the ‘ very sense and use of the word Baptism there ;’ How so ? ‘ For the best way to find the sense of ‘ this word, as applied to the case of baptizing ‘ christians, is to observe how the scripture applies ‘ it to other cases ; and by this way the scripture ‘ sense of it is found to be *washing*, however that ‘ be done.’ and then you produce instances where the *washing* of hands, cups, tables or beds, &c. is express’d by the word *baptism*.

*Ans. 1.* Though the scripture in some cases should use the word *baptism*, where *washing* must be understood ; yet it will not follow, that the word is so to be understood in *Christian baptism*, any more than it will follow, that because the word *sacrifice* is applied to our *praise thanksgiving* and *good works*, Heb. xiii. 15, 16. therefore we must thus understand Christ’s *sacrifice* : thus you may see where your rule would lead you. But I think you had best keep by the *primary* and *proper* sense of a word till some circumstances in the text lay you under a necessity of understanding it otherwise ; and this you cannot pretend of *Christian baptism*.

2. It is not denied that these things you mention were *washed* ; but the question is, whether were they not *baptized* or *dipped* in the act of *washing* ? if they were, then the word is properly used still ; and I suppose you will not undertake to  
prove



prove they were only washed by *sprinkling* or *pouring* †.

3. According to your own rule, *baptize* must signify to *dip*; for thus the original theme βαπτω, from whence βαπτίζω is a derivative is applied in other places of scripture; as in Mat. xxvi. 23. 'He that, *εμβαψας*, *dippeth* his hand with me in the dish,' &c. Luke xvi. 24. 'Send Lazarus, that he, *βαφῇ* *may dip* the tip of his finger in water' &c. John xiii. 26. 'He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I, *βαψας*, *have dipped* it.' Rev. xix. 13. 'And he was clothed with a vesture, *βεβαμμενον*, *dipped*, in blood.'

Your next argument is, That, 'in the case of Christian *baptism*, *washing* stands often in the New Testament as another word for it, and as declaring the import and sense of it,' of which you give instances from, Eph v. 26. Heb. x. 22. Tit. iii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Acts xxii. 16. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 'From these (you say) it may appear, that according to the scripture use of the word *baptism*, *immersion* cannot be called *baptism*, any otherwise than as it is a mode of washing with water.'

*Answer.*

† 'If the Pharisees touched but the garments of the common people they were defiled and needed immersion, and were obliged to it.' *Maimonides in Misi. chagigah. c. 2. sect. 7.*

'The more superstitious part of the Jews, every day before they sat down to meat, dipped the whole body; hence the Pharisees, admiration at Christ, Luke xi. 38.' *Scaliger de Emend. Temp. Lib. 6. p. 671.*

In the Jewish Misnah, or book of traditions, it is said, 'A bed that is wholly defiled, a man dips it part by part.' *Celim, c. 26. Sect. 14.*

*Anfw.* That *washing* stands often as another word for *baptism* may be granted; for a man is washed when he is immersed or dipped; but that washing in *whatever manner*, is used for baptism, I deny: for the body is not washed with pure water, by *sprinkling* or *pouring* a little of it on the face, as it is by *immersing* or *plunging* it in water. So that though immersion be a mode of *washing* with water; yet it is not for this called *baptism*; but because it is that very mode which is express'd by the Greek word βαπτίζω, and no other. *Washing* is a general word, which includes various modes, and that of dipping among the rest; but *dipping*, by which this ordinance is express'd, is a particular mode, and cannot properly include any other.

‘ The ancients, who added several ceremonies to the simple institutions of Christ, and found out spiritual meanings to them, amongst other rites added to baptism, used this of *dipping thrice*. But they did not proceed so far, in this way, as to deny, that washing with water in any other way is baptism: for they used *clinic* baptism, and surely baptizing a sick man in his bed, was not burying him under water. Washing with water, then, was from the beginning the sign in baptism, in whatever way, or after whatsoever mode it was done.’

*Anfw.* 1. What reason have you to find fault with the ancients for *dipping thrice*, since you think any manner of washing will do?

2. Though they likewise used *clinic* baptism, yet they

they did not think it a proper rule for ordinary baptism, as you do; but excused it by the plea of urgent necessity †; and they pretended to no evidence for it from the New Testament, but founded it upon the ceremonial sprinklings of the law, and the metaphor used by the prophet Ezekiel, chap. xxxvi. 25. But still they made a distinction betwixt baptismal washing, and the pouring of water upon the sick \*. However, if you think the ancient superstitious *clinic* baptism a sufficient warrant for *sprinkling* or *pouring*, 'tis at your service, though it be among the other ceremonies, which they added to the simple institutions of Christ.

You tell us, 'the common way of baptizing is not by *sprinkling*, as has been always falsely alleged in this controversy, but by *pouring* water from the hand of the baptizer on the baptized.' A very curious distinction indeed! but what does this make for your purpose? Why, 'if the scripture calls pouring forth the Holy Ghost upon men, baptizing them with the Holy Ghost, then pouring forth water on men, is baptizing them with water, in the scripture use of the word baptism.'

*Answ.* So you hold by *pouring*, for its similitude to the baptism of the Holy Ghost: (I shall remind you of this in the sequel) but, according to this manner of arguing, *filling* men with water must be baptism; for they are said to be filled with the Holy Ghost: *giving* men water must be baptism; for

† Cyprian. *Epist.* 69. *ad Magnum.*

\* Cyprian. *ibid.*

for the Holy Ghost is said to be given : and *sprinkling* with water (notwithstanding your distinction) must be baptism still ; for the ordinary baptism of the spirit is by sprinkling the heart from an evil conscience. Thus baptism with water may be explain'd to be any thing, every thing, or nothing.

‘ Christ was baptized with a baptism, which  
 ‘ was at his death ; but that baptism was by water  
 ‘ and blood poured forth from his pierced side up-  
 ‘ on his dead body ; and there was no dipping  
 ‘ there.’

*Ans.* Was the gushing of blood and water from the pierced side of Christ's dead body, the thing he precisely meant by his baptism, and that in distinction from what he endured before he bowed the head and gave up the Ghost ? If so ; it will greatly favour some ancient instances of baptizing dead bodies. But it is evident that the baptism wherewith our Lord was baptized at his death, respected all that he suffered whether in the garden or on the cross ; which sufferings are called baptism, not properly but metaphorically. The Psalmist useth metaphors of the same import, when speaking of Christ's sufferings, Psal lxxix, 1, 2. ‘ *Save me, O God, for the waters are come in into my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing : I am come into deep waters, where the floods OVERFLOW me.* And was there no dipping or immersing here ? And is not our being buried with Christ by baptism, a fit representation of communion with him in his death and burial, and our rising again from under the water, a proper  
 sign

sign of fellowship with him in his resurrection? Rom. vi. 3, 4, 5. Col. ii. 11, 12, 23. But in opposition to this, you say,

‘ Our communion with Christ, and conformity to him in his death, burial and resurrection, is by the renewing of the Holy Ghost,’ &c.

*Answ.* True; but if you argue against the scripture mode of baptism, because it is not the thing signified; you may likewise argue against every mode of it for the same reason; and thus you will shake hands with Quakers, who deny baptism with water, because it is not the baptism of the Spirit.

—— ‘ But if we look on the will of the institutor express’d in his word as the sole ground of the relation betwixt the sign in baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and that which is signified by them; we will not look for any such similitude in these instituted signs as we do in pictures or images.’

*Answ.* You have not yet shewn that it is not the will of the institutor there should be a *resemblance* betwixt the sign and the thing signified. On the contrary, you have endeavour’d to shew that there is a *resemblance*, when arguing for the mode of pouring, which you found entirely upon its *resemblance* to the pouring forth of the Holy Ghost upon men: but whether you think it bears the similitude of a picture or image to this, I will not say. In your argument from Col. ii. 11, 12, 13. you affirm, ‘ That in place of the circumcision made with hands they [Christians] are buried with Christ

‘Christ in baptism;’ and this you distinguish from the circumcision of the heart, as the sign is distinguished from the thing signified. Now, if there be a burial in the sign, in distinction from the renewing of the Holy Ghost, then that burial must be in water, for the scripture informs us that the sign is water.

— ‘Shall we say upon it, that the scripture confines us so to one manner of washing, that another way of it cannot be called baptism?’

*Ans.* You can screw matters even this same length upon other points, and stand to it with boldness: but here it seems your right arm is weakened, and you are willing to make a coalition that will comprehend all the modes of washing that can be thought on, and secure their friendly intercommunity. The only fault you find with *immersion* is its unsociableness and want of charity to its neighbours. Let me tell you, Sir, this is not agreeable to your usual manner of writing when conscious of truth upon your side, which indicates you have some misgiving of heart about your favourite mode. You allow *immersion* to be one mode of washing; but then you cannot think to be confin’d to any one mode of it: But what have you now made of Christ’s simple institution? And what can the drift of all your arguments be, but to throw the scripture manner of baptism into ambiguity and darkness, that so you may accommodate the ordinance to the tender state of infants. But what if after all we should still say upon it, that the scripture has determined the manner as well

well as the subjects of baptism ; and that the scripture manner is baptism in distinction from any other manner of washing that you may please to use upon improper subjects ?

‘ The confidence of some in this matter is the more unaccountable, that they cannot be ignorant, it is impossible to shew, from the particular accounts of the Lord’s baptism and the eunuch’s, that either of them were baptized otherwise than by pouring water on them from the hands of the baptizers. For if it should be inferred from the eunuch’s going down into the water, and coming up out of it, (as it is also said our Lord did,) that he was plunged ; the same must also be said of Philip the baptizer ; for the words are, *They went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch ; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water.*’ If these words, say any thing of dipping the baptized, they say full as much of dipping the baptizer. But to any man that is capable of understanding words, these words plainly say, That being baptized with water is another thing than going down in to the water, and coming up out of it.’

*Answ.* This paragraph is of a piece with the rest, tending to shew, that there is no certain rule in scripture for the mode of baptism ; and this you do by throwing dust upon these circumstances by which the scripture mode is determined, whilst at the same time, you can pretend to no foundation in scripture for the mode of *pouring* at all : so that your argument proves nothing ; but is an attempt

to invalidate all proof whereby the manner of baptism can be determined either one way or another. But this whole paragraph proceeds upon a gross mistake; for we do not affirm, that *going down into the water* is the same with *baptism* or *immersion*: Philip and the eunuch might go to their necks in water, and yet not be baptized. But I ask, why went they down into the water? Was it that the eunuch might have a little of it pour'd upon him from the hand of Philip; Certainly no: for this might have been done at the brink, without wetting the soles of their feet, or the eunuch might have been thus baptized in his chariot by a small quantity of it in a vessel. It is evident then that the eunuch was not baptized by pouring of water from the hand of Philip; but in such a manner, whatever it was, as required a depth of water, to obtain which, we find, they went both down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and this, though it was not baptism, yet it was a necessary step in order to it.

Though Philip went down into the water as well as the eunuch, yet he was not thereby baptized; (as he certainly would, had any manner of washing been baptism) but he went down to perform that action upon another. What kind of action then must this be that Philip performed upon the eunuch, and that required they should go both into a depth of water? Can we think the Holy Ghost, in relating these circumstances, had nothing in view but what was accidental and superfluous? No surely; they all concur to ascertain, that



that the action was *immersion*, as they could be requisites to no other mode; accordingly it is said, *ἐβαπτισεν*, *he immersed* him, Acts viii. 38. which action required, that Philip should take hold of the eunuch, bury him in the water, and raise him up again from under the water. Thus you may see that the circumstances of the eunuch's baptism, tally exactly with the sense of the word *βαπτίζω*, to *dip*, *immerse* or *plunge*.

Nor were these circumstances any way singular; for our Lord was baptized in the river Jordan, having gone down into it; as is evident from Mat. ii. 16. Mark i. 10. where we are told that, after his baptism, he came up out of the water. Baptism (or immersion) requires *much water*; and *John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there*, John iii. 23. Whereas, had he used the mode of sprinkling or pouring, he had no occasion to make choice of such a place.

To conclude, the most learned and judicious of the Pædobaptists, ever since this practice took place, have ingenuously confess'd, that the scripture mode of baptism is *immersion*, and the main plea they have for *sprinkling* or *pouring*, is its suitability to the tender bodies of infants. Thus we see one deviation from the scripture rule introduces another, till at last the law of God be made void by mens vain traditions.

I am,

SIR,

Your humble Servant.



A  
D E F E N C E  
O F  
BELIEVER BAPTISM,  
IN OPPOSITION TO  
INFANT SPRINKLING.

In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

BEING

An ANSWER to a Pamphlet, entitled, "Remarks on Scripture Texts relating to Infant Baptism."

TOGETHER WITH

Some STRICTURES on Mr HUDDLESTON's Letters, and other Writings on that Subject.

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By ARCHIBALD M'LEAN.

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*GAL. iii. 26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

*Verse 27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.*

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EDINBURGH:

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## P R E F A C E.

**A**BOUT eleven years ago, I wrote an answer to Mr. Glas's Dissertation on Infant Baptism, in a series of Letters addressed to the author. My chief design was to show the Independents of this country, that infant baptism, and the arguments which they use in support of it, were not only void of all foundation in scripture, but subversive of their own professed doctrine, upon which they have separated from the national church. No direct reply has been made to this by any in Scotland; but Mr. Huddleston, pastor of an Independent society in Whitehaven, has attempted something of that kind. To this also a full and particular answer has been written, but not published.

The following pages are written in answer to a recent publication, entitled, "Remarks on Scripture Texts relating to Infant Baptism;" which I am credibly informed is the long studied and mature production of an eminent member of the second class of Independents at Glasgow, and therefore may justly be considered as containing the strength of their main arguments on that subject. I know not what others may think of it, but for my own part, were it not that I know the author, I should be ready to suspect that it had been written by some ironical wag on the other side of the question, with a view to expose the cause to ridicule.

The Independents are the most inconsistent of any set of people upon this subject. They admit that the people of the new covenant are distinguished from those of the old, by their  
a having

having God's law written in their hearts, and all of them knowing the Lord from the least unto the greatest, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34 \* :—That the subjects of Christ's kingdom are distinguished from the world by their being of the truth, and hearing his voice, John xviii. 37 † :—That the spiritual seed are distinguished from the fleshly, by their being born again of the Spirit, by the incorruptible seed of the word, John iii. 5. 1 Pet. i. 23 † : And that this distinction is only visible to us in the profession of their faith, Acts viii. 37. Rom. x. 9, 10 §. But whenever they attempt to establish infant baptism, they disregard, and some of them even ridicule ||, all such distinctions, and every visible evidence of them, as self-righteous, and resolve the whole into this single question, Are they born of believing parents? And though our Lord and his apostles absolutely deny that such birth can distinguish the true children of God as it did the typical, John iii. 5, 6. Rom. ix. 6, 7, 8. 2 Cor. v. 16, 17. yet all this goes for nothing; they still insist, that their being the natural seed of believers sufficiently marks them out as children of God, truly holy, and members of the kingdom of heaven. Thus they chime in with the national church upon the great radical point of her *Judaized Christianity*, and, in their baptism, hold a most intimate fellowship with her. Perhaps it may be said, that they make amends for this, and keep up their separation from the world, by refusing their children church communion till they profess the faith : but this is only

\* Glas's Works, Vol. I. p. 47. † Ibid. p. 122, 123. ‡ Ibid. p. 53.  
§ Ibid. Vol. IV. p. 33, 128. || Huddleston's Letters, p. 87, 88.

## P R E F A C E.

only adding one inconsistency to another ; and implies, either that they do not believe the principles upon which they baptize them, or that the visible members of Christ's true body are unfit to be members of these societies which represent that body ; than which nothing can be more absurd.

You who know your Master's will, in this instance, and do it not, suffer a word of exhortation. You can amuse yourselves with speculations on this point, and clearly show the inconsistency of the opposite practice ; but what have you to say for the consistency of your own conduct ? or how can you justify yourselves to God for trifling with an acknowledged ordinance of the Lord Jesus ? Examine narrowly your motives. Is it because you hold it a circumstantial point of small moment ? Surely it does not become Christ's disciples thus to estimate any of his ordinances. The doctrine of believer baptism is none of the low singularities of a party ; it ranks with the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, stands upon the grand foundation of his good confession before Pontius Pilate concerning the nature of his kingdom and subjects as distinguished from this world, as well as upon the commission he gave his apostles for setting up that kingdom, and corresponds with the whole of their practice and doctrine in executing it. Perhaps your attachment to your present religious connection entangles you. You have formed this connection, and sat down upon the neglect of the first ordinance of the gospel, and now you cannot think of returning to it. But where

## P R E F A C E.

where do you find an unbaptized church in all the New Testament, or the least warrant for holding communion with such? Are they good Christians? Be it so; but will their Christianity justify your disobedience? Must not each of us give an account of himself unto God? You have charity for them. Have it still; but let it be the charity of the truth. Can there be any true charity in yielding up a plain ordinance of Christ to the blindness, prejudice, or perhaps perverseness of men? According to this, the more of them we yield in this way, the greater must be our charity. But true charity can never clash with our obedience to any of the laws of Christ, nor lead us to soothe others in the neglect of them; on the contrary, it will influence us to study their true interest, and set their duty before them both by word and example. Disentangle yourselves therefore from the insnaring influence of such a connection. Hear the words of Jesus which he proclaims to all men, and let each of them have their proper weight; "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved."—Hear his command to all who regard his authority; "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling upon the name of the Lord."

EDINBURGH, }

May 29. 1777. }

## E R R A T A.

Page 11. line 5. for *the* styles, read *he* styles.

Page 67. line 6, of the note, for *visible* read *invisible*.



A  
D E F E N C E  
O F  
BELIEVER BAPTISM, &c.  
In a LETTER to a FRIEND.

DEAR SIR,

I RECEIVED your favour, inclosing a pamphlet entitled "Remarks on Scripture Texts relating to Infant Baptism." But I think you might have excused me from writing an answer to it, since all that is therein advanced has been more than sufficiently refuted in my Letters to Mr. Glas, Reply to Mr. Huddleston, and View of the Pophecies, which you have seen. Besides, when people allow themselves (as this author hath done) to launch forth into the regions of fancy and conjecture, it is like hunting an *ignis fatuus* to trace them in all their vagaries. I find he aims a stroke now and then at my Letters to Mr. Glas, and seems to be a little warm when he says, "What are we that we should withstand God by refusing baptism to children \*?—We deceive the hearts of those who believe without proper evidence, and blind the minds of those who receive not the simple sayings of Jesus;" and he taxes us as men destitute of "sound and sober minds †." This is a very heavy charge; but as it does not reach conviction to me on the one hand, so nei-

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ther does it kindle resentment on the other. But I sincerely lament that he and his brethren should be so much bemisted about the subjects, manner and import of baptism, which cannot fail to corrupt their views of many other points of doctrine.

This small pamphlet, I see, is divided into four parts, and each part contains a proposition, with its proof or illustration. I shall therefore follow his method, and begin with

## P A R T I.

“ The little children who make up the kingdom  
 “ of God, as it appears in this world, may  
 “ be *distinguished* from other little children.”

For proof of this he adduces Mark x. 13, 14.  
 “ And they brought young children to him, that  
 “ he should touch them: and his disciples rebuk-  
 “ ed those that brought them. But when Jesus  
 “ saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto  
 “ them, Suffer the little children to come unto  
 “ me, and forbid them not; for of such is the  
 “ kingdom of God.” Now, for my own part, I  
 cannot see the least affinity betwixt this text and  
 the above proposition. — These particular little  
 children were indeed highly distinguished by Christ’s  
 taking them in his arms and blessing them; and we  
 learn from the passage this comfortable truth,  
 that of such little children is the kingdom of God;  
 but it speaks not a word about how one little child  
 may be *distinguished* from another as belonging to  
 that kingdom, which is the thing affirmed in the  
 proposition. And here the matter should rest;  
 but I am obliged to follow him through four ob-

observations, or rather imaginations, upon the words.

*Obs.* I. "Jesus here supposeth, that the little children who make up the kingdom of God, may be distinguished from other little children." — But where do we hear him supposing this? — "This much," says he, "is implied in the words, OF SUCH." — That is, we may suppose from these two words, if we please, that he supposeth it; and having converted this supposition of a supposition into a certain truth, he lays it as a foundation principle to build upon. — "From this," says he, "we learn, First, That they were the children of visible believers; for one little child cannot be distinguished from another, but as connected with its parents." — It is probable that those who brought the little children believed at least that Jesus was as capable to bless them as Jacob, Moses, or any other prophet; but how does the words OF SUCH, or any other words in the text, teach us that little children may be distinguished as of the kingdom of God by their parents? Our Lord says not a word about their parents, nor does he give the least hint, that they are to be distinguished by their connection with believing parents, this being only a figment of the author's own brain; so that if, as he owns, they cannot otherwise be distinguished, it follows, that they cannot be distinguished by us at all. But surely he will allow, that Christ can distinguish them, as in the instance before us, whether they are connected with believing parents or not. Another thing, he says, we learn from the words, is, "Secondly, That Christ is here speaking of the kingdom of God as it appears in this world." That is, he is not speak-

ing of the kingdom of God as it consists only of the elect and saved, but as it appears in this world to men, and is composed of foolish as well as wise virgins, Mat. xxv. 1.—13. Of bad as well as good fishes, chap. xiii. 47.—50. But here he flatly contradicts the account which Jesus himself gives of the kingdom in the very next verse, “ Verily, I “ say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the “ kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not “ enter therein,” Mark x. 15. Luke xviii. 17. or, as it is expressed in a parallel passage, “ Except ye be “ CONVERTED, and become as little children, ye “ shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,” Mat. xviii. 3. which is of the same import with what he says to Nicodemus, “ Except a man be “ born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. “ — Except a man be born of water and of the “ Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of “ God,” John iii. 3, 5. Since therefore our Lord explains himself, and tell us that infants belong to that kingdom of God, which none can enter but such as are converted; born again, and receive it as little children; how comes our author to say, that he is here speaking of the kingdom *as it appears in this world*, into which hypocrites and false professors may and do enter? Doubtless our Lord knew his own meaning best, and since he hath condescended to explain it, it does not become us to contradict him. Let it therefore be noticed, once for all, that Jesus is not here speaking of the *appearance* of his kingdom in this world, but of its *invisible reality*, for to this only is conversion and the new birth absolutely necessary. His next observation is,

*Obs.*

*Obs.* 2. "He (*viz* Christ) saith more on this occasion than is allowed by some who *call* themselves his followers. He saith, that the kingdom of God is of such little children, as the young children that were brought to him."—— But we are so far from disallowing this, that we hold it in a higher sense than the author seems to allow. We maintain, that the kingdom of God, as it is *invisible* and *unmixed*, is of such little children as those brought to Christ, and that all such shall certainly be saved; whereas he only pleads, that they belong to the *appearance* of it in the world, and that many of them may fall short of salvation \*. He observes that our Lord's words are not, "Such are of the kingdom of God;" but "Of such is the kingdom of God." I own, however, that I am rather too dull to comprehend this distinction; for I suppose the kingdom of God *is of such as are of it*.

"*Obs.* 3. He here supposeth that his disciples might have learned, from the revelation of God which they then had, that the kingdom of God is of such little children as these brought unto him; for the disciples could not be in fault, if they were not acting contrary to divine revelation; and he mentions this as the revealed truth which they acted in opposition unto, Of such is the kingdom of God."—— That the disciples were faulty in rebuking those who brought the young children to him is plain; and that they acted contrary to a prior divine revelation, is also clear from Mat. xviii. 2.—5. Mark ix. 36, 37. Luke ix. 47, 48. where, a considerable time before this, he had taught them, that little children were of his kingdom; and so not to be despised. After this revelation,

lation, it was certainly wrong in the disciples to hinder such being brought to Christ in the days of his flesh, even as it would be sinful in us to forbid any to pray for his blessing upon infants, now he is in heaven : but what is all this to the point ?—

“ From this,” says he, “ we understand, First, “ That these words of Christ are the public interpretation of such passages of the Old Testament scriptures as these, Psal. lxi. 36. and cii. 28. “ Isa. lxi. 9. and lxv. 23. Jer. xxx. 20. Ezek. “ xlvii. 22.” In these passages much is said of the seed, offspring, or children of the church, and here the author would have our Lord’s words to explain these children of *infants* in distinction from adults, and of the infants of *New Testament believers* in distinction from all other infants. But neither does Christ’s words here refer to such passages, nor do the passages themselves speak of children in respect of their being *infants*, or the *natural seed* of New Testament believers, but in respect of their being children of the church, which consists both of adults and infants, Jews and Gentiles, the natural seed of believers and unbelievers, even all of each of these who belong to the election of grace. This I shall briefly demonstrate.

It must be granted that the children spoken of in the forementioned passages, are the very same with those mentioned in Isai. xlix. where we find Zion, upon the infidelity and rejection of the fleshly seed of Abraham, complaining of her desolate, childless and forsaken situation. “ But Zion said, “ The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath “ forgotten me,” ver. 14. To this a most comfortable answer is given from verse 15. to 20. Then the Lord proceeds to comfort her with respect to her

her children ; “ The children which thou shalt  
 “ have, after thou hast lost the other,” (*i. e.* after  
 the Jews shall be cast off,) “ shall say again in thy  
 “ ears, The place is too strait for me ; give place  
 “ to me that I may dwell,” verse 20. At this un-  
 expected and numerous progeny, Zion is represent-  
 ed as wondering ; and indeed the New Testament  
 shows how much surprised the believing Jews were  
 when they saw the accomplishment of this ; see  
 Acts x. 28, 45. chap. xi. 8. and therefore there is  
 a question about it in the prophecy as a mysterious  
 and puzzling matter to Zion. “ Then shalt thou  
 “ say in thine heart, Who hath begotten me these,  
 “ seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate,  
 “ a captive, and removing to and fro ? and who  
 “ hath brought up these ? Behold I was left alone,  
 “ these where had they been ?” verse 21. To this  
 it is answered, “ Thus saith the Lord God, Be-  
 “ hold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and  
 “ set up my standard to the people ; and they shall  
 “ bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters  
 “ shall be carried upon their shoulders. And  
 “ kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their  
 “ queens thy nursing-mothers,” &c. verse 22, 23.  
*q. d.* I will cause the gospel to be proclaimed to  
 the Gentile nations, and will beget children to thee  
 from among them by the word of truth ; and as to  
 their natural birth, up-bringing, and earthly pri-  
 vileges, be not concerned about these, for I will  
 cause the heathen perform these offices to thy chil-  
 dren, and make the kingdoms of the earth as so  
 many nurseries, and their kings and queens to be  
 nursing fathers and mothers to them in common  
 with their other subjects.

In Isa. liv. 1—8. the church is again comforted with the promise of a numerous offspring. We can be at no loss to understand what church is here meant, for the apostle applies the first verse to the Jerusalem which is above, and the mother of all God's children, Gal. iv. 26, 27. which was typified by Sarah the free woman: and, as when Sarah was for a long time barren, till she was past age, and her womb dead, God promised that she should be blessed, and be the mother of nations, Gen. xvii. 16. so her antitype here is addressed, "Sing, " O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth " into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not " travail with child; for more are the children of " the desolate, than the children of the married " wife, saith the Lord," ver. 1. *q. d.* However desolate, forsaken, and barren thou mayst at present appear to be by the unbelief of the Jews; yet thou shalt bring forth a much more numerous offspring than the earthly Jerusalem, married to me by the Sinai covenant, and typified by Hagar the bond-woman. Therefore she is commanded, ver. 2. to make room for her numerous family, by enlarging the place of her tent, &c. That she might not doubt of this on account of her widowhood, it is said to her, ver. 5. "Thy Maker is thy husband, " (the Lord of Hosts is his name), and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel, the God of the " whole earth shall he be called;" and that in opposition to his being the God of the Jews only, Rom. iii. 29. so that it is the Lord, the church's husband that begets these children to her by the word of truth, (Jam. i. 18.) and hence it is said, ver. 13. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and " great shall be the peace of thy children." This last



last verse is cited by our Lord, and he explains these children to be, "Every one that hath heard and learned of the Father, and cometh unto him," John vi. 45. The apostle also explains this prophecy thus; "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all: for it is written, Rejoice thou barren, that bearest not; break forth and cry aloud, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband." And if we enquire what kind of children these are; he answers, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, ARE THE CHILDREN of promise:"—So then, we are not the children of the bond-woman, but of the free: *i. e.* We believers in Christ are the children promised in the prophets to the Jerusalem above, the anti-type of Sarah the free woman, Gal. iv. 26, 27, 28, 31. Here then, is the New Testament key, or public interpretation of the prophecies respecting the children; from which it is plain, they are not called *children* on account of their nonage, or *infant state*; for Paul and those he writes to were not children in that respect; yet, says he, "We are the children." Nor are they so called on account of their *natural birth*; for the Jerusalem which is above, brings forth no children by that kind of birth; yet he says, she is "the mother of us all;" and the nature of their birth is fully explained, John i. 13. chap. iii. 3, 5, 6. James i. 18. 1 Pet. i. 23. Neither is it because they are the *seed of believers* they are called children; for those to whom the apostle applies these prophecies were mostly the seed of Heathen infidels and idolaters.

But those who are not satisfied with the apostolic explication of the prophecies, may pun upon the

pro-

prophetic style, and plead, That the prophecies speak not only of the children of Zion as such, but also of *their* children, in such expressions as these:—  
 “ The children of thy servants—their feed—their children,” &c. and so must respect not only believers, but also their natural feed. In answer to which, I observe,

1. That these promises are all made, in the first instance to the Jews. They are delivered by their own prophets, and addressed to that people in particular, who were the maternal church, among whom God had not only a typical people, but also a remnant according to the election of grace, who believed and embraced the promises, and waited for the consolation of Israel. The apostle tells us expressly, that to them, “ belonged the covenants “ and the promises,” Rom. ix. 4. and that in distinction from the Gentiles, whom he describes as at that time “ aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise,” Eph. ii. 12. Peter addressing the Jews, tells them, that *they* were the children meant in the prophets, “ Ye are the children of the prophets, “ and of the covenant which God made with our fathers,” Acts iii. 25. and he shews the convicted Jews, that the promise of the extraordinary effusion of the Spirit mentioned in Joel, was also primarily made to them. “ The promise is unto you. “ and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call,” Acts ii. 39. (For Peter knew not as yet that the Gentiles should receive the Holy Ghost, till he learnt it afterwards in the instance of Cornelius, chap. x. 44, 45.) Accordingly we find,
2. That these promises had their *first* accomplish-

ment.

ment among the Jews. Christ's personal mission was only to them, as he declares himself, "I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." These he calls the *children*, in distinction from the Gentiles, whom he styles *dogs*, Mat. xv. 24—28. Hence also, during his personal ministry on earth, he forbids his apostles to go into the way of the Gentiles, Matth. x. 5, 6. and even after his resurrection, when he extends their commission to *all nations*, he commands them to preach the gospel *first* unto the Jews, Luke xxiv. 47. This the apostle says was *necessary*, Acts xiii. 6. and the necessity of it is explained, Rom. xv. 8. "Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision, for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers," *i. e.* he had his personal mission to the Jews, to vindicate God's faithfulness in his promises to their fathers by the prophets. Peter having told them, that they were the children primarily intended in the prophets, and in the promise of the new covenant, shows the fulfilment in these words, "Unto you *first* God having raised up his Son, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities," Acts iii. 25, 26. And Paul addressing the Jews at Antioch, says, "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the FATHERS, God hath fulfilled the same unto US. THEIR CHILDREN," &c. Acts xiii. 32, 33. Thus it appears that the promises made unto the Jewish *fathers*, had a primary respect unto THEIR CHILDREN, as they are called in the prophecies; yet not unto *all* their natural children *as such*, for then that whole nation behoved to be saved; but only unto a *remnant* of them according to the election of grace, even

ven as many of them as the Lord should call, *blefs,* and *turn from their iniquities*, as the apostles explain it. But,

3. In the prophetic style, old Israel are not only called *fathers*, in respect of the elect among their natural children, but also in respect of Gentile believers, who are likewise reckoned *their children*. For proof of this, see Jer. xxxi. 31, 32. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with **THEIR FATHERS** in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt," &c. Here those with whom the Lord made the old covenant are called the **FATHERS** of those with whom he promises to make the new covenant in Christ's blood, and which includes believing Gentiles as well as Jews. They are likewise so called in the New Testament. In Heb. iii. and iv. the apostle proves at large, that the address, Psal. xcv. 7, 8, 9. respects the New Testament church, "To-day, if ye will hear my voice, harden not your hearts as in the provocation—when **YOUR FATHERS** tempted me," &c. Here old Israel are called the **FATHERS** of the people of God for whom the heavenly rest remains; that is, the spiritual seed of all nations, who believing enter into rest. Again, writing to the Corinthians, he says, "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all **OUR FATHERS** were under the cloud, and passed through the sea," &c. 1 Cor. x. 1. where we find old Israel styled the **FATHERS**, not only of Paul who was a Jew, but also of the believing Corinthians who were Gentiles.

Now,

strictly to the apostolic explication of the prophecies, as well as types of the Old Testament. We cannot therefore go at first hand to the prophecies, in order to explain the New Testament by them; on the contrary, we must enter them with the New Testament key, by which they are opened to us in express quotations, doctrine, or the history of facts; for the inspired and able ministers of the New Testament teach without a veil, and use great plainness of speech, 2 Cor. iii. 12, 13. This being the case, I lay down the reverse of our author's position, and maintain,

That the prophecies which went before concerning the calling of the Gentiles, and the children who should make up the Messiah's kingdom, must be understood according to, or explained by, our Lord's commission to his apostles, in connection with the subsequent revelation.

The best commentary upon our Lord's commission to his apostles, is their practice in executing it, of which we have an account in the history of the Acts. Facts are always the plainest and most convincing arguments.

1. Jesus commands them to "Go, and teach all nations;" or as Mark hath it, "Go ye into all the world, and *preach the gospel* to every creature," chap. xvi. 15. Accordingly we find them going about every where teaching or preaching the gospel, first to the Jews, and afterwards to the Gentiles of all nations; and it was by this teaching alone that they made disciples.

2. He commands them to *baptize them*, viz. those whom they should previously teach, or make disciples by teaching; for Mark hath it, "He that be-

“ *lieveth*, and is baptized.” Let us now see if they always observed this order, *viz* of baptizing only those whom they had first taught or made disciples. Peter first preaches the gospel to the Jews, “ then they that gladly received his word were baptized,” Acts ii. 41.—Philip, in the first place, preaches the gospel to the Samaritans, and then, “ when they *believed* Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus, they were baptized both men and women,” Chap. viii. 12.—The same Philip preached Jesus to the eunuch, but it was not till he *professed the faith*, that he baptized him, ver. 35, 37, 38.—Peter first taught Cornelius, his house and friends, and it was not till the *Holy Ghost fell upon them*, and they *magnified God*, that they were baptized, chap. x. 44—48.—Paul and Silas first spake the word of the Lord to the jaylor, and to all that were in his house, and when they believed it, they were baptized, chap. xvi. 32, 33, 34.—In like manner, “ many of the Corinthians hearing, *believed*, and,” then it follows, they “ were baptized,” Acts xviii. 8. These instances demonstrate, that the apostles adhered strictly to the order of the commission; and I make bold to challenge all the Pedobaptists in the world to produce one single instance wherein they deviated from this order, or baptized any till they were previously made disciples by teaching.

3. They are commanded to *teach* the baptized disciples, *τὴντιν*, to observe (keep or obey) *all things* whatsoever he had commanded them. This last teaching is not only expressed by a different word in the original, but differs in various other respects from the first, and so is not a tautology. The first has

has for its *object* all nations; the last only the baptized disciples gathered out of the nations. — The *design* of the former is to make disciples, or beget unbelievers to the faith; that of the latter is to instruct believers how they ought to walk and please God. — The *subject matter* of the first is the gospel; that of the latter, Christ's laws and ordinances. That the apostles always timed this last teaching according to the order stated in the commission, is also plain from the whole of their practice. As they never baptized any but such as were first made disciples by preaching the gospel to them; so neither did they ever teach men to obey the laws of Christ till they were baptized disciples. They never supposed that any could obey the gospel, till once their minds were principled by the truth; nor did they make any account of that obedience which does not spring from love, a pure heart, a good conscience, and faith unfeigned. Wherever we find them inculcating the observance of the *all things* Christ hath commanded, they address themselves only to disciples, and draw the reasons and motives of their exhortations from the principles of the gospel, which such are supposed already to believe. To evince this, I might cite all the commandments and exhortations of the New Testament. †

C. 2.

Thus

† As the Lord's supper is among the *all things* which the baptized disciples must be taught to observe, it is plain, that none are proper subjects of baptism, but such as may immediately after receive the Lord's supper. Mr. Huddleston says, "This objection takes its rise from this notion; That none are *capable of being members of the body of Christ*, but those who are also capable of being members of those churches which are formed to shew forth this body." *Left. p. 77.* — *Ans.* No; but it takes its rise from this notion, That none are *capable of baptism*, but such as are also capable of being the same day added to a visible church, and so of continuing in the apostles doctrine, and in fellowship, and in *breaking of bread*, and in prayers,

Thus it is clear, that the apostles executed the commission in all its parts, in the very order in which it was delivered to them; and it would have been preposterous, as well as direct disobedience in them, to have done otherwise; for indeed, that order is founded as well in the nature of things, as in positive institution; and cannot be disarranged or inverted, without throwing the whole into confusion and absurdity. We have no occasion therefore to go to the prophecies for explaining the commission. This would be to use the light of a candle to let us see the meridian sun. It is sufficiently plain of itself; and if any possibility of doubt should remain, the apostolic practice entirely removes it.

Further, the prophecies concerning the children who should make up the Messiah's kingdom as it appears in this world, must be understood according to this commission, and the subsequent revelation given the apostles for executing it. But this commission respects no *visible* children but such as are capable of being *taught*, or made disciples by teaching; and to this agree the prophecies respecting them, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children," "dren,"

Acts ii. 41, 42. Baptism is the sign of the new birth, and the Lord's supper of feeding upon Christ the true bread; and so the connection betwixt these two ordinances, and the things signified by them, is as immediate and necessary, as that betwixt a person *having* life, and his *taking* food to preserve it. If therefore, persons appear to be born of the Spirit, and have the sign thereof in baptism, how come they to be denied the sign of their spiritual nourishment in the supper? What can this represent but children in a starving condition? It is admitted, that baptism belongs to none but such as are visible subjects of the kingdom of God; and I lay it down as an axiom, which I am confident none can overthrow, *viz.* That the Lord's supper belongs to all the visible subjects of the kingdom of God immediately upon their being baptized.



"dren," Isa. liv. 13. which our Lord explains thus, "Every one that hath heard, and learned of the Father, cometh unto me," John vi. 45. for they are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, Gal. iii. 26. The apostles acknowledged none as visible children of God, but such as professed this faith. Such also are the children who are to be baptized according to the commission; for it does not say, Baptize little children first, and teach or disciple them afterwards; but, on the contrary, it runs, "Teach all nations, baptizing them."—"He that *believeth*, and is baptized;" and with this the whole of the apostolic practice, as also their doctrine about baptism corresponds; "For (says the apostle) we are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of us as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ," Gal. iii. 26, 27.

Enough, I am persuaded, has been said to convince any simple and candid person, that the commission has no respect to the baptism of infants, and that such a practice is every way incompatible with it, as well as with the prophecies which relate thereto. But I must take notice of some of our author's fancies on this head.

He gives us two views of the commission.—1. As it respects *teaching*.—2. As it respects *teaching and baptizing*. A most curious distinction indeed! As if the apostles were to *teach* some whom they were not to *teach and baptize*, and *teach and baptize* others whom they were not to *teach*. His intention, however, is to show, that the commission warrants the baptism of those who are not taught. Upon the first part of this imaginary distinction, he says,

1. "This commission, as it respects *teaching* or

“ *preaching*, is to be understood according to the  
 “ prophecies that went before concerning the calling  
 “ of the Gentiles.” This he grounds on Acts xiii.  
 44—47. where the apostle cites Isa. xlix. 6 to show  
 the Jews, who did not regard the commission or the  
 authority of Jesus, that he was warranted from  
 their own scriptures to preach the gospel to the  
 Gentiles. But, were we to understand the com-  
 mission only according to this prophecy, then the  
 apostles would have had no commission to teach the  
 Jews; for this prophecy, as quoted by the apostle,  
 speaks only of the Gentiles; whereas they were  
 commissioned to teach *all nations*, both Jews and  
 Gentiles; to preach repentance and remission of  
 sins, in Christ’s name, among all nations, *begin-  
 ning at Jerusalem*, Luke xxiv. 47. to some of them  
 was committed the gospel of the *circumcision*, as  
 unto Peter; to others the gospel of the *uncircumci-  
 sion*, as unto Paul, Gal ii. 7. and accordingly they  
 preached the gospel, *to the Jews first, and also to  
 the Gentiles*, Rom. i. 16. This, then, is a wrong  
 view of the commission, because partial. After all,  
 what concern has it with infant sprinkling? I sup-  
 pose we must gather this from his second view, viz.  
 2. “ This commission, as it respects *teaching and  
 baptizing*, must be understood according to the  
 “ prophecies concerning the calling of the Gen-  
 “ tiles, and the children who should make up the  
 “ Messiah’s kingdom as it appears in this world.”  
 For this he cites Acts ii containing Peter’s dis-  
 courses to the Jews. But how does Peter’s teach-  
 ing the Jews show he was commissioned only to  
 teach the Gentiles? Or how does it show, that  
*teaching and baptizing* respects infants? To dis-  
 cover this we must have recourse, after all, to the  
 author’s

author's paraphrase, giving such a sense of ver. 38, 39. as he owns the apostle himself did not understand or intend; and no wonder, for indeed it is a very strange one. — "Change your views of the Messiah's kingdom—for the promise of a standing in his kingdom as it appears in this world, is unto you, and to your children, and to them that are afar off, belonging to any nation in the same way that it is unto you; that is, to them and their children: in this way it is unto those whom the Lord our God shall call out of every nation; for the Gentiles are to have the same privileges with the Jews in the kingdom of Jesus." — The *repentance* which our author here calls the Jews to, is such as they did not need: it required no change in their views of the Messiah's kingdom to believe, that they as the children of Abraham, and their carnal seed, should have a standing in it, for this was the view they all along had of it; but when John the Baptist preaches the kingdom of the Messiah, he calls them to repent of such views, "Begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father;" (Luke iii. 8.) or, in other words, We have a believer to our father; for this can procure you no standing in the Messiah's kingdom. Agreeable to this the apostle says, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh;" *i e.* We esteem no man a subject of Christ's kingdom by his carnal descent from Abraham, or by any thing that constituted him a member of, and entitled him to, the privileges of the Jewish church — "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is (or, let him be) a new creature," 2 Cor. v. 16, 17. — Again, the *promise* which he makes them of a *visible standing* (as he calls it) is very

very different from that which Peter here mentions, which is the promise of the *Holy Ghost* spoken of by the prophet Joel; see ver. 16—22.—Further, the *children* here mentioned, are supposed by our author to be *infant children*, for such only can answer his purpose; but the apostle is here speaking of the same children that are spoken of in Joel, viz. their sons and their daughters who should receive the Spirit and prophecy. Mr. Hudson observes on this passage, that “Peter says, “the promise is unto *you*, i. e. all gladly receiving “the word.—From these *you* he distinguishes “*their children*, and connects them in the promise; “and their children sure must be all the children “that could not be included in the preceding “*you*, so all their little children\*.” But he might also have told us, that the Jews had infant children who cast out devils; for our Lord asks them, “By whom do *your children* cast them out?” Mat. xii. 27. Here the children are distinguished from those whom our Lord addresses, and cannot be included in the preceding *you*, and so, according to this author’s logic, must be “all their little children.” Mr. Sandeman, however, seems to have had a very just view of the children here spoken of, where he says, “The promise is *only* to as “many as the Lord our God shall call; and *none* “can appear to us to be the called of God, but “such as appear to *believe* the gospel which Peter “preached, and to *comply* with his exhortation to “repentance†.”—Lastly, he makes Peter tell the Jews, that “the Gentiles were to have the “same privileges with them in the kingdom of “Jesus.”

"Jesus :"—Whereas this was more than he knew himself, till it was afterwards revealed to him; nor was it to his purpose in calling the Jews to repentance, who were not yet able to bear that truth. In short, the author has so framed his paraphrase, as to lead one to think, that Peter was addressing Baptists instead of Jews, and that he was calling them to repent and baptize, their infants! and yet, after all, we find none baptized there, but *they that gladly received his word*, and were that same day added to the church, ver. 41. Permit me now, in my turn, to paraphrase these two verses, The promise of the Holy Ghost, spoken of in Joel, is unto you, Jews, and to your children, even your sons and daughters who shall prophecy, ver. 17. and it is not only to you who dwell at Jerusalem, but also to those of you who are afar off from thence dispersed among the nations; yet not to all the Jewish nation, but to the remnant according to the election of grace, (Rom. ix. 27. chap. xi. 5.), which in the prophecy are styled "the remnant whom the Lord shall call," Joel ii. 32.; so this promise is even to as many of you, and your children, both here and elsewhere, as the Lord our God shall call, and to none else of you; for he giveth the Holy Ghost only to such as obey him, chap. v. 32. Repent therefore, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, according to God's promise. He owns we "say just things concerning the two covenants, viz. the law or Sinai covenant, and the new or better covenant; and the two seeds, viz. the natural seed of Abraham, and the spiritual seed of Christ, who are also called "the

" the seed of Abraham, as being connected with  
 " him who is of the seed of Abraham, according  
 " to the flesh, the great promised seed." — Had  
 the author considered properly what he is here  
 saying, he might have seen, that by this conces-  
 sion he hath entirely given up the point, and cut  
 himself out from every ground to stand upon;  
 it being impossible for him to hold these distinc-  
 tions consistently with the principles he lays down  
 for infant baptism; for he gives the very same  
 place to the fleshly birth in the kingdom of Christ  
 under the new covenant, that it formerly had in  
 the earthly kingdom under the old covenant. He  
 makes it as good an evidence of their being Chri-  
 stians, as it was formerly of their being Jews: nay,  
 he makes it of greater avail now, than under the  
 old covenant; for then it could not distinguish  
 the spiritual seed of Abraham; but now, (accord-  
 ing to his doctrine), it points out those whom we  
 are to reckon the true holy seed, and heirs of spi-  
 ritual, everlasting and heavenly privileges. Mr.  
 Huddleston asserts, " That the fleshly seed of New  
 " Testament believers are really the spiritual seed  
 " of Abraham \*;" but he denies, that they are  
 distinguished by the fleshly birth, and says, " Be-  
 lievers infants are distinguished by that same  
 " thing which distinguishes themselves to be the  
 " spiritual Israel, viz. the confession of the mouth  
 " to salvation †." Do infants then confess the  
 faith with the mouth? No.—How then are they  
 distinguished? By the confession of another.—  
 Very well; and does this confession respect all in-  
 fants? No.—How then do we distinguish the in-  
 fants whom this confession respects, from other  
 infants

infants? By their being the infants of the professor, or springing from him by *natural generation*. Thus we see it lands in the *natural birth* at last; and if this be not confounding the apostolic distinction of the covenants and seeds, I know not what is.

But then our author says, we “confound the distinction that is betwixt the *spiritually holy nation*, “which consists of the saved out of all nations, “with the *kingdom of God as it appears in this world*; “and in this way deceive the hearts of those who “believe without proper evidence, and blind the “minds of them who receive not the simple sayings of the Son of God;” and for this distinction he cites Matth. xiii. 47—50. which speaks of the *good and bad fishes*; to this he might have added, Matth. xxv. 1—14. which speaks of the *wise and foolish virgins*.

As the author’s whole scheme of reasoning rests entirely upon an *improper use* of this distinction, which is to be met with almost in every page of his book, I shall consider it particularly.

1. We maintain, that the true kingdom of God consists of the whole body of the elect, whether Jews or Gentiles, infants or adults, who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and who shall all be certainly and finally saved. This is that society which the scripture calls the *general assembly* and church of the first-born, which are enrolled in heaven, Heb. xii. 23. the *whole family* in heaven and in earth, Eph. iii. 15. the *one body*, having the one Spirit, and of which Christ is the head, chap. iv. 4. chap. v. 23. and which is commonly called his *invisible kingdom or church*. Into this kingdom  
no

no hypocrite or unclean thing can enter, Rev. xxi. 27.

2. We maintain, that this kingdom *appears in this world unto men*, in the open profession of the faith of Jesus, with its correspondent fruits, and in no other way; but as men do not always speak as they think, and as good actions may often proceed from bad principles and motives; and further, as we neither can, nor are allowed to judge the hearts of men, hence hypocrites and unbelievers may enter into the *appearance* of this kingdom in the world; and so our Lord represents it in this view, as consisting of wise and foolish virgins, good and bad fishes, &c. To this view of the kingdom belong the churches of the saints, each of whom are a *visible representation* of that one body which is invisible. But to the point:

3. Those whom the scripture points out unto us as belonging to Christ's kingdom as it appears in this world, must also be looked upon as belonging to the holy nation of them that are saved. We are obliged by the word of God to esteem none brethren, but such as profess the faith, and walk accordingly. We are also bound by that same word, to esteem every one who professes the faith of Christ, and appears under its influence, to be not only in *appearance*, but in *truth and reality* the elect of God, and to love them as brethren for whom Christ died. We are not allowed here to make any distinction betwixt those who belong to the appearance of Christ's kingdom in this world, and those who belong to the spiritually holy nation of them that are saved——1. Because we cannot do it. This distinction belongs only to God. He alone knows whom he hath chosen, and who are his; he also searcheth



*appearance* must be esteemed by us his *real* subjects, and belonging to the spiritually holy nation of them that are saved ; for this plain reason, because it is the *appearance* of that *very thing*.

What an unworthy view must our author have of the subjects of baptism, and even of his own brethren, when he distinguishes them from the spiritually holy nation of the saved, and cannot look upon them as belonging thereto ! What can be the foundation of his charity to them ? Does ever the scripture enjoin us to love a mere appearance, without supposing its invisible reality ? But our author, that he may avoid confounding matters, takes special care, all along, to let us know, that he does not mean the reality, but only the appearance of things ; and so he is contending for a mere shadow, a thing of nought.

He comes next to what is commonly called the *mode* or *manner* of baptism ; but I shall defer the consideration of this, till I have discussed his arguments about the *subjects*, and proceed at present to

### P A R T III.

“ The household of Lydia were baptized when  
 “ she made profession of the faith of Jesus,”  
 Acts xvi. 13, 14, 15.

His meaning is, that her household were baptized upon her single profession of the faith, without being either taught, or making a profession themselves ; and his reason for this supposition is, that it is not particularly mentioned. But by the same rule of interpretation, we may deny that she

professed the faith herself before baptism ; for neither is that particularly mentioned in so many words. Rom. x 10. however, is to him a sufficient proof, that she must have confessed the faith with her mouth ; and if so, he cannot in justice blame us, though we should refer him to the commission as a proof that her household were *taught* and *believed*, before they were baptized ; especially, when this is corroborated and explained by the whole practice of the apostles, and the instances of all the other households they baptized. He cannot but allow, that it is a good and safe rule to make the scripture its own interpreter, or to explain the more concise and obscure passages by such other passages relating to the subject as are more full and explicit ; and if he admits of this rule in every other case, he ought certainly to shew cause why it cannot be admitted here. I appeal to himself, if he has not purposely singled out this account of Lydia's household in distinction from all the rest, for its very conciseness, and as affording him, from its silence, the greatest scope for conjecture. Surely that must be a bad cause which obliges men to shun the light, and avail themselves of darkness, and so oppose what the scripture *says not*, to what it positively and repeatedly declares. Taking advantage then of the silence of this passage, he conjectures, that Lydia's household was all made up of little children ; and then she must have been an extraordinary woman indeed, to have managed her public business of selling purple, together with a family of helpless infants, for it does not appear she had a husband at that time. If it be supposed she had servants to assist her, then, for any thing we know, these may have been her *household*, according

cording to the frequent use of that word in scripture; see Gen. xvii. 27. 1 Kings i. 9, 11. 2 Kings vii. 9, 11. But our author imagines they were infants, because when she invites Paul and his companions to her house, she uses this argument, "If ye have judged *me* faithful, whereas had they been adults, she must have said, If ye have judged *us* faithful, else she must have had "a high sense of her own importance, and a great penury of "brotherly love." But perhaps she knew, that she had the *only* right, both by the law of God and man, to invite them to her *own* house, and that in her *own* name too, as she was the mistress and head of it, as well as proprietor of all the entertainment therein; and perhaps she did this in the kind simplicity of her heart, without imagining what bad construction would be put upon this act of love 1724 years afterwards. Supposing her thoroughly instructed in the Christian law of "esteeming others better than ourselves, and in honour preferring one another," Rom. xii. 10. Philip. ii. 3. (for which she had as yet very little time), yet it could never enter into her head, that that law set aside her civil superiority of mistress over her servants, or her natural superiority of a parent, even over her adult children; see Eph. vi. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8. Nor could she ever learn, from any exhortation in all the New Testament, (supposing it then written), that she was now deprived of the sole right of disposing of her own; of using hospitality to saints and strangers; and of pressing their acceptance of her kindness, as an evidence that they esteemed her faithful to the Lord therein; see 3 John ver. 5.

The author does "not chuse to say what must

“ be ascribed to Paul and his companions, who  
 “ were constrained by this argument :” for it seems,  
 had they complied with her invitation as a testimony  
 that they esteemed her faithful, it would have  
 been such an atrocious sin in them, as is not fit to  
 be mentioned. But he ought to remember, that the  
 apostles were not so evil-minded as he would have  
 been in this case. They were not so ungratefully  
 disposed, as to snap at the hand that offered them  
 a kindness, nor so captious as to carp at expressions  
 dictated by a heart overflowing with love.

He says, “ We may learn from Jesus’s words,  
 “ that her little children are here called her hou-  
 “ shold ; for, pointing at the little children who  
 “ were brought to him in the days of his flesh, he  
 “ said, *Of such is the kingdom of God.*” There are  
 some assertions difficult to answer from their ex-  
 treme absurdity ; and I am mistaken if this is  
 not one of them. Our Lord does not here men-  
 tion any person’s household whatever, far less the  
 household of Lydia in particular ; neither is he de-  
 fining the word *household*, or restricting its sense to  
 little children, contrary to its usual acceptation  
 throughout the whole scripture. His words are  
 not, *Of such only are the households of believers ;*  
 but, “ *Of such is the kingdom of God.*” How  
 then can we learn from these words that Lydia had  
 little children, who are here called her household,  
 and that in distinction from her adult children and  
 domestics ? Noah’s house consisted of his wife, sons  
 and daughters-in-law, and there were no infants  
 there, Gen. vii. 7. Abraham had a numerous hou-  
 shold of servants, whilst as yet he had no child of  
 his own, Gen. xiv. 14. chap. xv. 2, 3. Our Lord  
 says, “ A man’s foes shall be they of his own house-  
 “ hold,”

“hold,” Matth. x. 36. does the word *household* here mean little children? The word *house*, or *household*, in scripture signifies sometimes a man’s kindred, lineage, and distant posterity, Luke i. 27. chap. ii. 4. sometimes a whole people or tribe, Psal. cxv. 12. and sometimes, a man’s particular family, including his wife, adult and infant children, as well as domestic servants, as has been shown; but in no part of the word of God does it signify little children in distinction from adults, this being only a conceit of some modern Pedobaptists, invented to support their cause with the ignorant; but which must prejudice it with those who search the scriptures for themselves.

The passage itself, however, affords evidence that Lydia’s household were adults; for we are told, ver. 40. that Paul and Silas “went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia, and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.” Now, infants cannot be supposed capable of being comforted; and whether it is most reasonable to think that they comforted these young converts of Lydia’s household, whom they were now leaving behind them, exposed to the hatred of their infidel neighbours, or these hardy veterans Timothy and Luke, their fellow-travellers and labourers, who departed along with themselves, let the reader judge. This same Timothy was sent back to comfort and strengthen the Thessalonians, a little while afterwards, i Thess. iii. 1—8.

Our author farther affirms, that “the baptism of the household of Lydia, when she professed the faith, was agreeable to the doctrine which Paul taught; for he said to believers in Jesus,

"sus, "The unbelieving husband is sanctified to  
 "the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified  
 "to the husband; else were your children un-  
 "clean," or common, "but now are they holy," or  
 "set apart unto God." 1 Cor. vii. 14. But what  
 has this text to do with baptism? The apostle is  
 not here speaking a word upon that subject, but  
 answering the scruples of Christians about con-  
 tinuing in their marriage relation with infidels. He  
 makes the apostle to say, that the children are ho-  
 ly as "set apart unto God;" whereas he is speak-  
 ing of a holiness which is the result of the unbe-  
 lieving party's being sanctified or made holy; for,  
 says the apostle, "the unbelieving party is sancti-  
 fied, else were your children unclean." The  
 apostle denies that the children would be holy, un-  
 less the unbelieving parent were so also; and it is  
 certain, that no other holiness can result from, or  
 be thus connected with, the holiness of an unbe-  
 liever, but what is of the same nature with itself.  
 Mr. Huddleston, after having told us, that the un-  
 believing wife is sanctified to the husband as his  
 food is, gives us his view of the holiness of the  
 children thus, "But now are they holy, viz. as  
 "the Corinthians themselves were holy, being  
 "washed, sanctified and justified in the name of  
 "the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God\*."  
 Let us try then how the text will read according to  
 this gloss; "The unbelieving wife is sanctified to  
 "the husband as his food is; else were your chil-  
 "dren neither washed, sanctified nor justified in  
 "the name of the Lord Jesus, nor by the Spirit  
 "of God!!!" The very stating of this, mani-  
 fests its absurdity at once. The same author pro-  
 poses

poses what he calls a reasonable request, viz. "Let any text in the Bible, between the beginning and the end, be produced where a person is said to be *holy*, where a special relation to God, or being devoted and separated to him is not intended \*."—But without entering into such an extensive search, I produce this very text under consideration, "The unbelieving husband is sanctified (*ἁγιασται*, *made holy*) by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified (made holy) by the husband;" to which let me add his own sense of these words, that "the unbeliever is sanctified to the believer as his food is †," and this gives a full answer to his request, until he inform us what *special relation* to God unbelievers have by this holiness, and how they are *devoted* or *separated* to him thereby. He says, "We have generally explained the sanctification here to intend marriage—but is it possible we can be serious in supposing the apostle would tell these Corinthians that had unbelieving wives, that they were married to them? or, did the Corinthians need to be told this? ‡" No; but though they did not need to be told they were married, yet they needed to be told that their marriage was *lawful*, else what was the ground of their scruple at all? He is not telling them they were married, but that their marriage was *lawful* or *holy*, by showing them that the unbelieving party was *sanctified* (iv) in that relation to the believer, and so not to be put away. He also misrepresents our view of the uncleanness and holiness of the children. "We have (says he) explained the uncleanness of the children to be *bastardy*, and the holiness *legitimacy* §;" and he thinks

\* Letters, p. 72.

† Ibid, p. 30.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.

thinks the Corinthians had no occasion to be told, their children were not bastards; for as they were the children of marriage, they must have known them to be legitimate. But by bastards in this case we do not mean those begotten betwixt persons single, or unmarried, but the issue of *unlawful* marriages, like those which sprung from an Israelite's marriage with a heathen. This is the uncleanness which the apostle is speaking of; and as he makes this uncleanness of the children, to come from the supposed unlawfulness of their parents marriage, so does he make their holiness to be the effect of the lawfulness or sanctity of that marriage; and what kind of holiness can this be but legitimacy, they being begotten according to the law of God, which is the standard of all holiness?

That the holiness of the children here is of the same kind with that of the unbelieving parent, will be further evident, if we consider, 1. That the apostle infers the one from the other: "The unbelieving wife is sanctified;—else were your children unclean; but now are they holy;" now it does not follow from the parent's having one kind of holiness, that therefore the children must have another and higher kind; but it follows clearly, that if the wife or husband is lawful, the children must be so also.—2. The apostle absolutely denies that the children would have this holiness, unless the unbelieving parent (*hynasai*) had been sanctified, or previously made holy: "The unbelieving wife hath been sanctified;—else were your children unclean." Now, if the holiness of the children be the effect of their being washed, justified and sanctified, it could never depend upon, or stand and fall with that inferior kind of holiness ascribed



ed to the unbelieving parent ; for this would be to make the very salvation of children to depend upon the lawfulness of their parents marriage ; but if we understand the holiness to be legitimacy, it is plain that this depends entirely on their parents having been lawfully married. 3. When the apostle says, " Else were your children unclean," he shows what would have been the case, had the law of Moses been in force with respect to their unbelieving wives ; but that law made the children unclean in no other sense than it made the unbelieving parent ; therefore the holiness which he opposes to that uncleanness, and ascribes to each, must be the same in both. — 4. No other holiness than legitimacy could suit the apostle's argument against putting away their unbelieving wives ; for the children of even an incestuous marriage may have the holiness of the truth, while yet the marriage itself ought still to be dissolved ; but if the children are lawfully begotten, then the marriage must have been lawful also, and therefore must stand.

Upon the whole, it is demonstrably clear, that the meaning of the passage is neither more nor less than this, " Ye must not put away your unbelieving wives, if they are willing to dwell with you, (as Israel were obliged to do by their law of separation from the heathen, Deut. vii. 3.) else ye must put away your children also ; for that law classed them with the unclean party, and enjoined them to be put away, Ezra x. 3 ; but now, under the gospel, both the unbelieving party, and the children begot with them, are holy or lawful, even as the meats formerly forbidden are, (1 Tim. iv. 5.) that law being set aside  
" which

“ which made them unlawful or unclean.” Now, what has this passage to do with infant sprinkling?

Our author asserts, that “ the children of believing parents are represented in scripture as some way connected with their parents in the profession made by them;” and for proof of this cites 2 Tim. i. 16. “ The Lord give mercy to the house of Onesiphorus; for *he* oft refreshed me, and “ was not ashamed of my chain ” So it seems Paul could not pray for the house of Onesiphorus, unless they had been connected with their parent in his profession!!! Does this deserve an answer? The household of Onesiphorus were not infants, but had made the profession themselves, as is evident from his charging Timothy, in this very epistle, to salute them, chap. iv. 19.

The author says, children are *some way* connected with their parents; but does not tell us *what way*. I will venture to do it for him. The *peculiar* connection betwixt a parent and his child is entirely natural and carnal. If they are Christ's, they are in that respect both equally *children*; and in relation to one another, in this connection, they are not *parent* and *child*, but *brethren*; in which respect they are as much related to all the household of God as to one another. This connection has nothing to do with the fleshly relation, but is supernatural; nor is it *peculiar* to parent and child, but is founded on that *common* union by which every member of Christ's body is connected with him as the Head.

He concludes this part, by observing, “ That in “ the baptism of little children we have a lively representation of this great truth, As sin and “ death came from the first Adam to all his natural

“ tural seed, and even to little children, without  
 “ any act or deed of theirs; so righteousness and  
 “ life come from the second Adam to all his spi-  
 “ ritual seed, and even to little children in the  
 “ same way.” — This seems to imply, that this  
 great truth is not so properly represented in the  
 baptism of believers, because they can perform  
 some *act or deed* of their own to obtain righteou-  
 ness and life \*. If there is any thing in this repre-  
 sentation peculiar to infants, it must ly in this,  
 that as by the obedience of one many are made  
 righteous; so (according to our author) by the  
 profession of one man all his infants appear righ-  
 teous. Thus the parent and his profession for his  
 household, is a lively representation of Christ and  
 his vicarious obedience for the whole household of  
 faith!!! But then the other part of the represen-  
 tation is not quite so lively; for whereas by the  
 disobedience of one many are made sinners, and so  
 in their first birth are *shapen in iniquity and conceiv-  
 ed in sin*, the author teaches us, that children are  
 born *holy* by virtue of their connection with believ-  
 ing parents, and this may be constructed by *weak  
 minds* as contradicting the doctrine of original sin;  
 for every one will not be able to understand how  
 righteousness and life should be transmitted to us  
 in the same channel with sin and death.

Mr. Huddleston affirms, “ That men have their  
 “ little children connected with them in the great  
 “ salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ, even as they  
 “ are in the condemnation by Adam †.” But this  
 contradicts a number of scripture facts; Adam  
 had a Cain in his family, Noah a Ham, Abraham

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an

\* The Papists have invented many *lively representations*, which  
 they think more significant than those which God hath enjoined.

† Letters, p. 23.

an Ishmael, and Isaac an Esau, none of which children the scripture directs us to look upon as connected with their parents in salvation, and yet all these were infants before they became adults. But he has a salvo for this, *viz.* that the connection in salvation continues only during their infancy, but vanishes in the adult state. This hereditary salvation, fleeting as it is, he makes peculiar to the New Testament: "The promise (says he) which is to believers and their children, belongs to the covenant made after these days; and it was never said to Abraham, thou shalt be saved, and thy house \*." Now, if we compare this with his affirming, that this promise "is the very testimony of the gospel †," it must follow, that the gospel was not preached before unto Abraham; nor could his faith "answer to that which is now preached," or be set before us in the New Testament as the example of our faith, as in Rom. iv. 12, 23, 24. Gal. iii. 6—9. Neither can we, according to this author, perceive Abraham to have been of the kingdom of God; for (says he), "We perceive an adult person to be of the kingdom of God, by his confessing the truth to his own salvation, and *the salvation of his house* ‡" Lastly, according to this, we have no ground to believe there were any elect infants under the Old Testament; for he denies that we have any other foundation whereon to rest our opinion that there are elect infants, but their connection with their believing parents §; yet Abraham, it seems, had not even this evidence. However, when we consider all that has been advanced upon this salvation, Abraham would be at very little loss, it being a matter not worth the contending for.

P A R T

## P A R T IV.

“ Baptism is the figure corresponding unto the  
 “ preservation, and visible salvation of Noah,  
 “ and seven more in connection with him in  
 “ the ark, by water.—“ Wherein few, that  
 “ is eight souls, were saved by water. The  
 “ like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth  
 “ also now save us; not the putting away of  
 “ the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a  
 “ good conscience towards God, by the re-  
 “ surrection of Jesus Christ.” 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.

Here our author runs the parallel betwixt baptism and the temporal deliverance of Noah and his family from the flood, thus; —“ It agrees there-  
 “ to as water is used in baptism.”—This we grant;  
 for the apostle says, that eight souls were saved  
 (*ἑπτὰ ψυχὰς*) *through, by, or rather in* water, as the same  
 original phrase is rendered, 2 Pet. iii. 5. So bap-  
 tism represents not only our death and burial with  
 Christ, but also our resurrection with him, and  
 deliverance from death, Rom. vi. 4. Col. ii. 12.—  
 He says, “ It agrees thereto, as baptism is a sign of  
 “ the salvation that is by Christ.”—The salva-  
 tion of Noah and his house, by the ark in water,  
 was indeed a type of the salvation that is by Christ;  
 for the apostle calls baptism, and the salvation  
 signified thereby its (*ἀντίτυπος*) *antitype*. But it ought  
 to be noticed, that there is still such a difference be-  
 twixt them, as is betwixt Old Testament types and  
 New Testament ordinances. The redemption of  
 old Israel from Egypt, when they passed under the  
 cloud, and through the sea, was also a type of bap-  
 tism and the salvation signified thereby; but that

typical baptism was not into Christ, but into Moses; and the salvation by that baptism was not the salvation by Christ, but the temporal deliverance of an earthly nation from Egyptian slavery. Even, so the salvation of these eight in water was in itself only a temporal salvation from the deluge, and the preservation of a race of men, as well as of every other animal, for replenishing the earth. But the New Testament baptism has no temporal, typical, nor even *visible* salvation (as our author affirms \*) connected with it, but is the immediate sign of the spiritual and invisible salvation by Christ. It does not save from the flood, nor from Egyptian bondage, nor by putting away the filth of the flesh, like the legal bathings; but by the death and resurrection of Christ; and in this respect it essentially differs from these earthly deliverances being their *antitype*, as the apostle declares. All this, however, is nothing to the point, and therefore he adds, "It agrees thereto as the *little children* of believers are baptized, and so visibly saved on account of their connection with their parents." This is a strange assertion indeed! and so far from having any foundation in the text, that it is every way contrary to it. The passage informs, us that there were but *eight souls* saved in the ark, and our author (as in the case of Lydia's household) supposes they were little children; but the scripture expressly tell us, that these *eight souls* were Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives, see Gen. vi. 18. chap. vii. 7. chap. viii. 16. Surely these married sons were not little children, neither were their wives little children, nor were they Noah's proper children at all. How then does the baptism

\* Letters p. 26.

tism of little children agree thereto, when there were no little children there? If it proves any thing at all about the baptism of a believer's children, it proves too much, *viz.* that the adult children of a believer must be baptized on account of their connection with him, for such only can agree with Noah's sons: and it will also prove, that not only a man's own adult children, but also his wife, and the adult children of others, should all be baptized upon his single profession; for without this it cannot agree to Noah's wife and his sons wives. But as the author does not admit that this passage warrants the baptism of *adults* upon the profession of another, (though such are the only persons here mentioned); surely, with much more reason may we deny, that it warrants the baptism of little children, when we are sure there were none such among them. In whatever respect, therefore, baptism agrees with the salvation of these eight persons, it cannot be in having little children for its subjects; and this is clear from the passage itself:—"Bap-  
 " tism doth also now save us (not the putting away  
 " of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good  
 " conscience towards God) by the resurrection of  
 " Jesus Christ." The answer of a good conscience is the effect of faith in Christ, as delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification, and consists in the conscious sense of the remission of our sins, peace with God, and freedom of access unto a throne of grace, which could never be obtained by the typical sacrifices or purifications, see Heb. ix. 9, 13, 14. chap. x. 1, 2, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22. Now, baptism being the sign of that purgation in the blood of Christ, which gives the answer of a good conscience, it cannot be administered to any

but such as appear by their profession to have their consciences thus purified by faith in Christ's blood, of which infants can give no evidence.

To affirm, that little children are "*visibly saved*," "*on account* of their connection with their parents," is, in my opinion, a very self-righteous doctrine. It has been already shown, that we cannot, according to the scripture, look upon any as *visibly* saved, without looking upon them as *really* saved;—because the former is the very evidence or appearance of the latter;—because we neither can nor ought to distinguish them;—and chiefly, because Christ hath purchased no *visible* salvation for any, in distinction from a *spiritual, everlasting, and real* one. If then children are *visibly* saved on account of their connection with their parents, they must also, in our estimation, be *really* saved ON THAT ACCOUNT. This is fine doctrine indeed! and, if it be not putting the parent in the place of Christ, it looks something like it. It can easily be conceived how children may obtain temporal deliverances in connection with, and even on account of their parents. such as the salvation from the deluge; and redemption from Egypt; but the gospel salvation comes by another connection, and must be placed to another account. Will the author affirm, that he himself was even *visibly saved*, (as he calls it), on account of his connection with his parents? and does he teach his children, that they are saved on account of their connection with him? If neither he nor his children can take the comfort of this connection for their own salvation, what is he contending for all this time? Surely that must be a salvation unworthy of the gospel that cannot be trusted to. He says, "*Visible* salvation is by



“ baptism ; but *real* salvation is through the shedding of Christ’s blood.” If he means by this, that baptism is the *sign* of *visible*, but not of *real* salvation by Christ’s blood, I have already shown this to be contrary to scripture, an unworthy view of the ordinance, and altogether absurd. But if he means, that baptism *itself* saves visibly, I ask, What does it save from ? It does not put away the filth of the flesh, like the legal purifications, nor does it save the body from slavery or death, like the typical salvations ; and the apostle tells us, that it cannot save the soul, or purge the conscience, but by the death and resurrection of Christ. — What idea then shall we affix to this *visible* salvation by baptism ? — a salvation which he distinguishes from *real* salvation by the blood of Christ ; — a salvation which does not advantage either soul or body ; — a salvation which must not be trusted to, but mocks our hopes, eludes our search, and flies our grasp, like a baseless vision. Is such a fancy as this worthy of the God of salvation ? Is it even worthy the name of salvation ? In short, it comports with nothing but these other dreams and imaginations with which the author has furnished out his whole pamphlet from beginning to end.

### Of the ACTION called BAPTISM.

Our author owns, that baptism is *dipping* or *plunging* in water, as the word frequently signifies this ; but then he thinks it bears another sense in 1 Cor. x. 2. though he does not tell us what it signifies there. He then proceeds to assert roundly, that “ Those who have water poured out or shed  
“ forth upon them, or are sprinkled with water,  
“ are

“ are baptized with water, according to the language of the New Testament;” for this he cites Mark i. 8. Acts i. 5. But none of these passages speak of *pouring* or *sprinkling* water, but of *baptizing* in it; and the question still returns, What does that mean? This he thinks may be gathered from baptism in the Holy Ghost, which is said to be *poured out*, or *shed forth* upon men, Acts ii. 16, 17, 33. chap. xi. 15, 16. Should we remind him, that the Holy Ghost was so poured out upon men as to *fill them* with it, and that therefore, according to this argument, they must also be filled with water in baptizing them; he will tell us, that this is a *foolish assertion*, and that *filling* men with the Holy Ghost, and *baptizing* them therewith, are as distinct as *cause* and *effect*! Thus he proves that baptism is either plunging, pouring, or sprinkling. In opposition to which I observe;

1. That the Greek word βαπτίζω, *baptize*, is never translated into English, when the ordinance of baptism is intended. *Baptize* is not a translation, but an adoption of the Greek word. The translators were forbid to render it into English in the instructions they received from King James\*, whereby people are left to affix any idea to it which the custom of the country suggests; and so, in this country, it is generally understood to mean the sprinkling, or pouring a little water on the face of an infant: whereas, *baptize* signifies to *dip*, *immerse*, or *plunge* in any thing, especially liquids, and in this ordinance, to *dip* or *immerse* the body in water. The Pedobaptists themselves generally acknowledge this sense of the word, and that immersion was the prac-

\* See a copy of these instructions in Lewis's history of the English translations of the Bible.

practice of the apostles, and continued in the church for at least thirteen centuries after.

All the methods by which the sense of any word can be found, fix the sense of *baptize* to be *immersion*. Should we trace it to its primary root, or follow it in all its derivatives and compounds; should we consult all the Greek lexicons of any note; or take the surer method of observing its constant and uniform use in Greek authors and translators, before the practice of sprinkling took place, we shall find all agree in fixing this as the common and proper acceptation of that word, and meet with no circumstance that will oblige us to depart from it.

This word, like most others, may indeed sometimes be used in a secondary, figurative, or less proper sense. Words are often chosen, not so much for their strict literal signification, as for some analogy or striking similitude they bear to the subject; but the proper sense of words cannot be fixed from such use of them. Thus our Lord represents his sufferings by a cup which the Father had given him to drink, John xviii. 11. but the nature of his sufferings will neither explain the meaning of the word *cup*, nor the action of *drinking* it. These sufferings are likewise called a *baptism*, Luke xii. 50. but from this we cannot fix the meaning of that word, or the action thereby signified, as it is only figuratively used, to represent the greatness of his sufferings, even as they are set forth in Old Testament metaphors, by his sinking in deep mire, and coming into deep waters, where the floods overflow him, Psal. lxix. 1, 2. It is said of Israel, that they "were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea," 1 Cor. x. 2. but  
Israel's

Israel's being *under the cloud*, and *passing through the sea*, ver. 1. (which was a wall upon their right and left), though it was a kind of immersion, yet it does not determine with precision the meaning of the word; for here was no action performed by one man upon another, as our Lord enjoins, nor was there a close contact of the water with their bodies, as there must be in Christian baptism.

It has been argued, that as baptism in the holy Ghost is expressed by *pouring him out* on men, therefore baptism in water must be performed by *pouring* water on them. But the extraordinary effusion of the Holy Ghost is variously expressed in scripture; it is called *anointing*, *filling with*, *giving of*, *pouring out* of the Holy Ghost, and believers are said to have all been *made to drink* into one Spirit. Now, which of all these expressions alludes to the manner of baptism in water? If it is said, *pouring* alludes to it; I ask, upon what authority is this affirmed? The scripture does not call this expression *baptism* more than the rest. The truth is, all these are but different expressions for the same thing, *viz.* the giving of the Holy Ghost; but none of them are expressive of the manner of that action called *baptism*, nor so much as allude to it. *Pouring* in particular, does not allude to the manner of *baptizing*, but to that of *anointing*; see Acts x. 38. 2 Cor. i. 21. 1 John ii. 27. the manner of which was by *pouring*, see Exod. xxix. 7. Mat. xxvi. 7. and it also alludes to the *watering* of fields to make them fruitful, for under this metaphor the effusion of the Spirit is often set forth; see Isa. xliv. 3, 4. chap xxxii. 15. compared with Heb. vi. 4, 7, 8.

The extraordinary effusion of the Spirit is called *baptism*, not in strict propriety of speech, but in-

allusion to baptism in water; and, excepting in one place, is always joined with it by a similarity of phrase. Thus Acts i. 5. "John baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost;" where it is plain, that giving the Holy Ghost is called *baptizing*, by a figure of speech borrowed from water baptism. Instances of this kind are innumerable in scripture. Jesus calling Simon and Andrew from their fishing, says, "I will make you fishers of men;" which is an expression taken from the employment they were then engaged in; and, as it would be very improper to explain the manner of fishing from the practice of the apostles in preaching the gospel, it must be equally so to explain the action of baptizing in water, by the manner in which the Spirit was given, for which there are various expressions besides that of baptism; especially too as these expressions are borrowed from material things, and so cannot strictly apply to the Spirit.

The word βαπτίζω is rendered *washing* in Mark vii. 4. and it is alledged, that the utensils there mentioned cannot be supposed to be *plunged* in water. But if we look into the law about cleansing defiled vessels, &c. we shall find, this was to be done by *plunging* or *putting them into the water*. "Whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be wherein any work is done, it must be *put into water*," Lev. xi. 32. And though the Jews are blamed for their superstition in holding things unclean that were not so by the law, yet they are not accused of using any other method of cleansing than the law prescribed. Mr. Huddleston asserts, that the washing of hands is

is also called baptism, Matth. xv. 2. Mark vii. 3.\* but in this he is mistaken, for the word there is not *baptizo* but *nip̄to*, which is the word used for washing of hands; and as for the baptism mentioned, Mark vii. 4. Luke xi. 38. it does not signify the washing of hands, but the bathing or immersion of the whole body. The baptisms mentioned, Heb. ix. 10. were not every kind of washing, but the divers baptisms prescribed by the law for unclean persons, which were performed by *bathing* in water. Thus Numb. xix. 19.—“and on the seventh day  
“ he shall purify himself, and wash his clothes,  
“ and *bathe* himself in water, and shall be clean at  
“ even.” And the apostle calls these bathings *divers baptisms*, because they were performed at different times, and for various kinds of uncleanness; see Lev. xv. 5, 8, 11, 13, 21, 22, 27. chap. xvi. 26, 28. chap. xvii. 15, 16. Numb. xix. 7, 8, 19. But with respect to the manner of applying the blood, water and ashes of the heifer, (Numb. xix. 17, 18.) he does not call this *baptism*, but (*rhantismos*) *sprinkling*, as it really was, Heb. ix. 13.

Had this ordinance included every mode of WASHING, it would not have been expressed by *baptizo*, but by *luo*, as in Acts xvi. 33. 1 Cor. vi. 11. 2 Pet. ii. 22. or *nip̄to*, as in John xiii. 6. 10. Matth. xv. 2. chap. xxvii. 24. or *pluno*, as in Luke v. 2.—Had it been SPRINKLING, it would have been expressed by *rhantizo*, as in Heb. ix. 13, 19. chap. x. 22. and xii. 24. 1 Pet. i. 2.—Had it been POURING, then the word would have been *cheo* or *chuo*, as in Luke x. 34. Acts ii. 17. 33. chap. 10. 45. But as this ordinance is neither *washing* in general, nor the modes of *sprinkling* and *pouring* in particular;

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so it is distinguished from these by another term, and which has a different signification, viz to *dip*, *immerse*, or *plunge*. It is remarkable, that we have the three words, *dip*, *sprinkle*, and *pour* occurring sometimes in the compass of two verses, and distinguished as three different successive actions to be performed upon the same thing, which demonstrates that they are not of the same import. Thus Lev. iv. 6, 7. " And the priest shall (bapsei) *dip* his " finger in the blood, and (prosranei) *sprinkle* of " the blood seven times before the Lord, and be- " fore the veil of the sanctuary,—and shall (ek- " chei) *pour* all the blood of the bullock at the bot- " tom of the altar of the burnt-offering." Now, had the priest presumed to convert *bapto* here, into *sprinkling* or *pouring*, he would have perverted the whole of this typical institution, been guilty of rebellion against the Lord, and might justly have expected immediate vengeance: and shall we think that the words of our Lord's commission are less plain and determinate than those of the law, and that we are at greater liberty to quibble upon, and alter them at pleasure?

The translators, in other cases, have rendered the primitive word *bapto* by the English word *dip*, wherever it occurs in the New Testament; see Matth. xxvi. 23. Mark xiv. 20. Luke xvi. 24. John xiii. 26. Rev. xix. 13. and had they in like manner translated it when expressive of this ordinance, every one would have known what action our Lord enjoins, when he says, *baptizing them*. They would then have seen, that men could no more be baptized by *sprinkling* or *pouring*, than they could eat the Lord's supper by *seeing* or *smelling*.

2. Neither *sprinkling* nor *pouring* will make sense  
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when substituted in place of the word *baptize*. They will not construct with (ἐν) *IN*, or (εἰς) *INTO*, one of which is always affixed to the word *baptize*, when the thing into which men are baptized is mentioned. For instance, John baptized (ἐν τῇ Ἰορδάνῃ) *in* Jordan, or (εἰς τὸν Ἰορδάνην) *into* Jordan, Matth. iii. 6. Mark i. 9. we have also (ἐν ὕδατι) *in* water, (ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ) *in* the Holy Ghost, Matth. iii. 11. (εἰς τὸ ὄνομα) *into* the name, Matth. xxviii. 19. (εἰς τὸν Μωσὴν) *into* Moses, 1 Cor. x. 2. εἰς Χριστὸν *into* Christ, Gal. iii. 27. Rom. vi. 3. This then being the uniform style of the original, let us try what language it will make with *sprinkling* or *pouring*. “Teach all nations, *pouring* them (εἰς) *into* the name, &c.—“And were *poured* of John *in* Jordan.—I indeed *pour* you *in* water,—he shall *pour* you *in* the Holy Ghost,” &c. This is strange style, and does not make sense; for it conveys an idea as if the persons themselves were poured as liquids into any thing. The like observation may be made on the other passages where baptism is mentioned, such as, “He that believeth and is *poured*,” &c. Mark xvi. 16. “—Into what then were ye *poured*?” Acts xix. 3. &c. which answers only to liquids, not persons. But if we substitute the word *dip* or *immerse*, which is the true English of the Greek word, then the sense is clear.

Neither will *sprinkling* do for the word *baptize*; for how would it sound to say, “*Sprinkle* them *in* water, “*sprinkle* them *into* Jordan,” &c.? This conveys the idea of any thing thrown in small scattered portions into water, and cannot suit persons. The translators were sensible of this impropriety; and therefore, instead of *in* or *into*, they have given us *with* \*

to  
\* *Ev* cannot be rendered *with* in the case of baptism, because the other word *εἰς* cannot be so rendered,



to make it agree with sprinkling, except in such places as it would not answer, such as Matth. iii. 5. Mark i. 9. Rom. vi. 3. Gal. iii. 27. Acts xix 3. and yet the original words are the same in the other passages as in these. Thus it is evident, that pouring or sprinkling substituted for baptism, is both contrary to scripture, and all propriety of speech.

3. The circumstances of our Lord's baptism, and of the eunuch's, shows it to be immersion. Jesus was baptized of John (*εἰς*) *into* Jordan, Mark i. 9. for he went up *out of* the water, and so must have been down in it, Matth. iii. 16. With regard to the eunuch nothing can be plainer. They came first (*ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος*) *to*, or *upon* a certain water, Acts viii. 36. and this is all the length that some will allow them to have come; but whether they will or no, the text adds further, "and they went down both (*εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ*) *into* the water," ver. 38. where Philip baptized him; and when this was performed, we have them coming (*ἐκ τοῦ ὕδατος*) *out of* the water," ver. 39.

4. The places which John chose for baptizing prove it to be immersion, *viz.* Jordan and Enon. His reason for chusing the latter place, we are expressly told, was "because there was *much water* there." John iii. 23. which could only be necessary for immersion. Some, however, have diminished the waters at Enon into small shallow rivulets, to prevent immersion if possible; and no doubt they would have done the same with Jordan, if they were not more afraid of a sneer, than of wresting the scriptures; for they would rather turn the whole country into a dry parched wilderness, than suffer John to immerse any. But that we may swell these waters at Enon again to a proper depth, let it be noticed, that the words *ὕδατος πολλοῦ*, *much wa-*

ter, or *many waters*, are the same that are used Rev. i. 15. chap. xiv. 2. chap. xix. 6. which do not signify the purling or murmuring of shallow brooks or rivulets, but the boisterous roaring of great waters like those of the sea, for it is compared to the voice of mighty thunderings; and that the land of Canaan was abundantly supplied with *deep waters*, is evident from Deut. viii. 7.

5. The allusions which the apostle makes to baptism point out the manner of the action. Christians are said to be baptized into the death of Christ, to be *buried* with him by baptism, and therein also to be risen with him, Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12. But if there were no kind of burial in baptism, how could it be alluded to as the sign of our burial with Christ? In whatever sense we are buried, it cannot be in baptism, if there is no burial there; nor can there be any propriety in mentioning baptism as the sign of a resurrection, if no such thing is to be seen in it. But when we consider, that baptism is a burial in, and a resurrection from water, the similitude is striking, and these passages clear and simple. Here our author tells us, that “they are baptized into  
“ the truth testified by the Three that bear record  
“ in heaven concerning Jesus. This makes baptism  
“ (he should have said *sprinkling* or *pouring*) a pro-  
“ per representation of his death and resurrec-  
“ tion, and of guilty men’s having fellowship with  
“ him in his death and resurrection” That is, in short, the thing signified makes any kind of sign a proper representation of it! and, by the same rule, he might have told us, that we *eat* Christ’s flesh and *drink* his blood by faith, and this makes any other kind of sign, as well as *eating* the broken bread and *drinking* the cup, a proper representation thereof.

But

But the main thing we should attend unto is the will of the Great Institutor, who hath expressly appointed the sign to be *baptism* or immersion, and not sprinkling or pouring: any other sign than this, be what it will, is not his ordinance, either in name or thing, and therefore can in no respect be a proper representation, but a human invention, whereby the law of Christ is made void.

I am, Dear Sir, Yours, &c.

ARCH. M'LEAN.

## A P P E N D I X.

**I**T may not be improper to add a few more strictures on what Mr. Huddleston, and others, have advanced, which did not fall in my way in answering the Remarks.

It is but too common for persons, when they cannot confute their antagonist by fair reasoning, to betake themselves to reproach and invectives; and hence it is, that the charge of self-righteousness is brought against us for denying infant sprinkling. Mr Glas says, that "The denial of infant baptism comes of making the salvation by baptism to ly in something else than the thing signified, even in that, whatever it be, which distinguishes the adult Christian from his infant; though our Lord expressly declares, that we must enter his kingdom even as infants enter it."—"This (says Mr. Huddleston) interferes with every argument brought to support the denial of infant baptism\*."—"Our denying infant baptism because we cannot see them of the true Israel, will be followed with this consequence, that we have something about us which shows us of the true Israel, that

“ has no respect to our infants entitling them to  
 “ our regard as such Israelites \*;—and this is in-  
 “ fluenced by the notion that we become members  
 “ of this Israel by some ability which distinguishes  
 “ us from our helpless infants †.——The true rea-  
 “ son for not admitting infants to baptism is, the  
 “ effect of making our salvation to ly in that which  
 “ distinguishes us from them ‡.”

This argument (if it may be called one) reminds me of what Bishop Tillotson says of transubstantiation; “ It will suffer nothing to be true but itself.” But how does all this prove, that Christ hath commanded infants to be baptized? The question about their baptism must be determined by scripture, and not by the self-righteous disposition of those who deny it; for suppose all the deniers of infant baptism were nothing but a parcel of self-righteous Pharisees, it would no more prove infant baptism, than Mr. Huddleston’s holding it, in connection with the church of Rome §, will prove the contrary. Self-righteousness can find access upon either side of this controversy. It has a deeper root in our hearts than to shift its quarters upon our changing sides in an argument, and can find its account even in contending for the truth. I have, however, in my second letter to Mr. Glas, demonstrated, that this charge is false, in as far as it relates to our reasons for denying infant baptism, which is all that belongs to the merits of the cause.

We firmly believe, and readily acknowledge, that infants are as capable of the grace of God, or of salvation, as adults are, and that adults are saved by that very thing which saves elect infants; but still we deny that infants are proper subjects of gospel ordinances, such as hearing the word, bapt-

Baptism, the Lord's supper, &c. These ordinances were never intended for them in infancy, nor are they capable of any benefit from them. He owns himself that infants cannot understand or believe the gospel \*; nor can they discern the thing signified in baptism, for this is the same with understanding and believing the gospel. When we say that infants can reap no benefit by the ordinances, we do not mean that they cannot be saved, but only that these ordinances are not the means of edification to them as they are to adults. The benefit of baptism, as well as of the word preached, and the Lord's supper, can only be enjoyed in understanding and believing what is therein represented; for as the evident end of these ordinances is to represent and set forth something to us for our instruction, edification, and comfort, these ends are gained, only in so far as the thing represented is discerned and believed, see Heb. iv. 2. Acts viii. 37. 1 Pet. iii. 21. 1 Cor. xi. 29†. We must not imagine that the water in baptism operates in the way of a charm, as the Papists believe of their holy water; or that the sacred name of Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is to be used as a spell, having no respect to the understanding of the

\* Letters, p. 54. 57. 62.

† This Mr. Glas fairly owns, where he says, "For this is the nature of the ordinances of divine service in the New Testament, that they are not complete in the outward and visible action, which is no more but the mean of engaging us in, or expressing outwardly, the substance of the ordinance, which is spiritual and visible: Thus baptism is not complete in the washing of the body with water, without the sprinkling of the heart from an evil conscience, which is the substance of that ordinance, as we may see from Peter's words, 1 Pet. iii. 21. And so when a believer of the gospel eats of the bread, and drinks of the cup, without feasting with God, as has been said, upon Christ's sacrifice; we may say he did not eat the Lord's supper." Glas's Works, Vol. IV. p. 174. 175.

the subject. No ; it is an emblematical preaching to the judgment of the person baptized, and a comfortable pledge to him of the remission of his sins, and of his fellowship with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection, for the strengthening of his faith, confirming of his hope, and so to influence his love to, and obedience of the gospel. Though infants can reap no benefit by gospel ordinances, of which they know nothing, yet they are at no loss, since the elect among them obtain that salvation represented by them, as well as the adult believer. Adults have no ground to glory over infants on account of any thing they do in the use of these ordinances, for the ordinances themselves hold forth no ground of hope to them, but what is equally free and efficacious for the salvation of infants who are incapable of observing them.

We are charged with laying a self-righteous stress on the profession of the faith ; but a profession must at least be so far necessary to baptism, as it satisfies the baptizer (who cannot search the heart) that the person is a proper subject of that ordinance. And in this we agree with Mr. Glas, who says, “ By  
 “ this profession ONLY we (who cannot search the  
 “ hearts of men) are capable to know the mem-  
 “ bers of Christ in this world ;—whilst that ap-  
 “ pearance is to be seen in any person, there we  
 “ must see a member of the body of Christ.—So  
 “ far then as any continue in the confession of the  
 “ word of the truth of the gospel, as it is the word  
 “ of God, and as it sanctifies them, distinguishing  
 “ them from the world,—so far they are proper ob-  
 “ jects of that love which he requires towards the  
 “ known elect in his new commandment \*.” Now,  
 this is the place we assign a profession, and all the  
 stress.

stress we lay upon it with respect to baptism. We find that Philip demands it of the eunuch to clear his way for baptizing him, Acts viii. 37. and Mr. Glas says, "that baptism cannot be administered to any but upon a confession by which the baptized can be called disciples according to the scripture." To set aside the profession of the faith, by which alone we can discern who are disciples, (*i. e.* persons *instructed* or *taught* in the truth, as the word imports) would be to overthrow at once the whole grounds of separation from the world, or any method by which it could be effected. Mr. Huddleston himself owns, "that a profession of faith before baptism does not indicate our disaffection to the salvation represented therein\*." A condescending concession indeed! How then comes self-righteousness to be connected with this profession in the Baptists more than in others? Because, says he, we "deny that this profession gives our infants the same appearance of being in a state of salvation, and the same title to baptism it gives us; for while this is the case with us, it is impossible we should not have some self-righteous stress resting upon our profession†," This is a very strange reason! He blames us for laying too much stress upon a profession, yet when he comes to explain himself, the blame falls on the opposite side. We hold, that a profession indicates only the faith or state of the individual person that makes it, and cannot answer for any other however nearly related to him by blood; whereas Mr. Huddleston thinks that a man's single profession is sufficient to denominate the whole of his house holy and of the kingdom of heaven, and so subjects of baptism.

Now,

\* Letters, p. 39. † Ibid.

Now, I think, it requires very little penetration to determine which of us lays the greatest stress upon a profession. Should a man's house, for instance, consist of ten persons, our author would lay ten times more stress upon the parent's profession than we can admit of. It is certain, the scripture lays more stress upon Adam's sin, and Christ's obedience, than upon the sin or obedience of any other individual that ever existed; and I leave you to judge, whether he does not lay something of a similar stress upon the parent's profession. Does he not make the parent a representative of his house in the faith and profession of the gospel, even as Christ is of the whole household of faith in his finished work? Yet this is the man that charges self-righteousness upon those who dare not in their consciences build such a fabric upon their profession!

But I cannot think he grounds his charge of self-righteousness solely upon this foundation. What he intends to insinuate is, that we deny infants are capable of salvation, and his reason for this can be no other than our denying them to be capable of baptism; for he does not appear to understand how those who deny their baptism can believe their salvation. Hence it is that he puts the question, "Upon what does the author rest his opinion, that there are elect infants to obtain this salvation in infancy, \*?" — Remove the baptism of infants, and the very basis upon which he rests his opinion of their election and salvation is overturned. Deny this, and it appears to him a "denying that any infants can appear from scripture to be elected to this salvation †." When we see the

\* Letters, p. 37.

† Ibid.



the author gravely and earnestly combating his own shadow, in order to prove, what was never denied, that infants as well as adults are of the kingdom of heaven \*, what propriety can we see in all this reasoning, if it be not his opinion, that to deny the baptism of infants, is the same as to deny their being of the kingdom of heaven ? Now, if we trace this sentiment to its source, we shall find that it proceeds from his making baptism necessary to salvation ; for if he cannot see how the salvation of infants can be held without baptizing them, then their baptism and salvation must be so inseparably connected in his mind, as that a denial of the former, necessarily implies to him a disbelief of the latter. This is the only foundation upon which his charge of self-righteousness can stand consistently. It is indeed the old argument upon which infant baptism was at first introduced, and upon which the Papists and many ignorant Protestants hold it to this day ; and hence we may account for the solicitude of parents to have their infants christened (as they call it) when in danger of death. Now, if this be not placing salvation in something else than the thing signified by baptism, it looks too like it. The author perhaps will be loath to admit this ; but (to return him his own words with a little variation) “ there wants  
 “ but a suitable occasion, with all his caution, to  
 “ make this fully manifest. Men are more ready  
 “ to place that confidence in baptism which be-  
 “ longs to the thing signified, than directly to own  
 “ it ; nay, they shew themselves very unwilling to  
 “ own it, whilst all their reasoning for infant bap-  
 “ tism,

\* Letters, p. 79---91.

" tism, from first to last, serves to demonstrate it.  
 " Let the pretended friends of divine sovereignty  
 " be gravely told, that their little children may be  
 " members of the kingdom of heaven, and saved  
 " without their faith, and even without baptism,  
 " and it may open a view to the hypocrisy of their  
 " friendship."

This author asks, " Whether or not does the  
 " appearance of Christ's kingdom in this world  
 " include every *age*, as well as sort of men, that  
 " shall obtain salvation through his sufferings,  
 " death and resurrection \* ?" To this I answer,  
 Though all the true subjects of this kingdom ap-  
 pear at one time or other in this world, (their bo-  
 dies being as visible as those of others), yet they  
 are not all visible to us in that respect which deno-  
 minates them Christ's subjects; of such are elect  
 infants who cannot, and many adults who do not  
 give proper evidence to us thereof; so that here  
 is an *age*, as well as sort of men, which do not be-  
 long to the appearance of Christ's kingdom in this  
 world, and yet obtain salvation through his death  
 and resurrection. These we call the *unknown*  
*elect*, and agree with Mr. Glas in distinguishing the  
 known elect from them by the profession of the  
 faith. The appearance of Christ's kingdom in this  
 world includes no *age* or sort of men of all the in-  
 numerable company that shall be saved, but such  
 as confess the faith, and give evidence to their fel-  
 low men that they know the truth. But we can-  
 not say how great a multitude may be saved that  
 are not included in the *appearance* of Christ's king-  
 dom in this word, both infants and adults. It is

pro-

\* Letters, p. 37.

probable the greatest number of his subjects are not included in that *appearance*.

He asks farther, upon what we rest our opinion that there are elect infants, since we do not allow that they are visible subjects of the new covenant \*? *Ans.* We rest our opinion and firm belief, that there are elect infants, not upon their being the children of believers, nor upon the faith and profession of their parents, nor upon any passage of scripture that inseparably connects the salvation of a man's house with his own salvation; but upon the scripture doctrine of election itself; which election, the apostle says, takes place before men are born, Rom. ix. 11. before the foundation of the world, Eph. i. 4. so that there must be elect infants, else there would be no elect at all, for all mankind are infants before they become adults. Election is not influenced by their having done good or evil, but is according to the sovereign good pleasure of God's will, who hath mercy upon whom he will, Rom. ix. 11, 15, 18. and hence we conclude, that it will stand as firm and sure with regard to that part of the elect who die in infancy as with respect to those of them who survive the infant state, and show their calling and election by their love and obedience of the truth. But were it our opinion, that election went upon what distinguishes the adult believer from his infant, or any thing done by man (whatever it be), then we behoved either to deny the salvation of those who die in infancy, or hold, with the Papists, that baptism saves them, or, with the author, that they are saved by the faith of their parents. Our Lord says expressly of little children, that "of such is

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\* Letters, p. 37.

“ the kingdom of heaven,” Mark x. 4. This clearly shows, that there are elect infants ; and, for my own part, I am much inclined to judge favourably of the state of all infants dying in infancy.

He observes, that the churches are exhorted to “ bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Eph. vi. 4. which does not suit with their being considered *out of the Lord* \*.” It is indeed the indispensable duty of parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, *i. e.* to give them such correction and instruction as the Lord hath enjoined in his word. They are their peculiar charge by the very law of nature ; and the gospel obliges Christian parents to study the good of their souls as well as of their bodies, to set a godly example before them, and to instruct them in the doctrines of the Christian faith : but how does this duty of the believing parent prove that his children are *in the Lord*, or the proper subjects of baptism ? Were not the apostles commanded to teach all nations the doctrine of the Lord ? Did not this suit with the nations being considered *out of the Lord* ? Is a parent free from all obligations of duty to his children, unless he can consider them as saved ? The apostle addressing those who were married to unbelievers, says, “ What knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband ? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife ? ” 1 Cor. vii. 16. even so it may be said in this case, What knowest thou, O parent, whether thou shalt save thy child ? When this appears to be the case by the profession of their faith, then must they be considered as *in the Lord* ; then may they be bap-

baptized, but not before. But Eph. vi. 4. is foreign to the point, for it speaks not of infant children, but of such as are capable of *admonition*: the word *νουθεσία* signifies to fix instruction upon their minds. In ver. 1. these children are exhorted to obey their parents in the Lord; and in ver. 4. fathers are forbid to provoke their children to wrath, but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; so that here are exhortations to mutual duties betwixt parents and children, even as betwixt husbands and wives, masters and servants, &c. which shows that the children here intended are not mere infants, but believing children, visible members of the churches, and capable of receiving and obeying the word of exhortation, which he enforces from its being the first commandment with promise, ver. 2, 3. and a duty well pleasing to the Lord, Col. iii. 20. As to the expression *in the Lord*, it does not intimate any *peculiar* spiritual connection betwixt a parent and his children: Christians are exhorted to marry only *in the Lord*, 1 Cor. vii. 39. wives to submit to their own husbands *in the Lord*, Col. iii. 18. This phrase signifies, either that they should obey their believing parents who are in the Lord, and so it is an additional motive of obedience; or, that they should obey in the Lord their parents, *i. e.* in the fear of the Lord, manifesting their subjection to him in so doing, and then it agrees with the exhortation to servants, Col. iii. 22, 23. Eph. vi. 5, 6, 7, 8.

The argument from circumcision seems to be almost given up by the Scots Independents. The anonymous writer of the Remarks, has not so much as mentioned it, and Mr. Huddleston has

lapped the very foundation of it, where he says, "The promise which is to believers and their children, belongs to the covenant made after those days; and it was never said to Abraham, thou shalt be saved and thy house \*." Here he fairly owns, that the covenant of circumcision made with Abraham, was not the same with the new covenant to which baptism belongs, and consequently he cannot argue from the circumcision of infants under the former, for the baptism of such under the latter. But whilst he distinguishes the covenants, he confounds the distinction of the seeds, and so makes baptism to belong to the natural seed of believers, even as circumcision belonged to the fleshly seed of Abraham. "As to what is observed (says he) of *natural* and *spiritual*, children and parents are alike, both natural and both spiritual †.—The fleshly seed of New Testament believers are really the spiritual seed of Abraham ‡." When we remind him, that the spiritual seed, or sons of God, under the New Testament, are described as "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 12, 13.—that "the children of the flesh are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed,—even the called, not of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles," Rom ix. 8, 24.—that therefore we cannot henceforth know any man after the flesh, or by his descent from religious ancestors, as in the Jewish church, but if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature, 2 Cor v. 16, 17. he does not scruple profanely to burlesque all such scriptures, and asks, "Will the infants of believers  
"being,

" being born of the flesh, prevent their being ty-  
 " pified by Israelitish infants? Could these infants  
 " typify any other sort of persons but what are  
 " born of the flesh?—I suppose believers are the  
 " same way born of the flesh that their infants are,  
 " were they not therefore typified by Abraham's  
 " fleshly seed\*?" But the Holy Ghost in denying  
 that the spiritual seed are the children of the flesh,  
 or born of blood, &c. does not mean that they  
 come into the world in a different way from others,  
 or that they are without natural parents; but the  
 meaning is, that their natural birth, be it of whom  
 it may, can neither *constitute* them the spiritual seed,  
 nor *distinguish* them as such to us. The covenant  
 of circumcision was made with the fleshly seed of  
 Abraham, and so their natural birth, by which they  
 descended from him, sufficiently distinguished them  
 in infancy as the subjects of circumcision; but the  
 new covenant to which baptism belongs, respects  
 only the spiritual seed who are born again; and as  
 these are not known to us till they profess the faith,  
 it is demonstrably clear that they cannot be baptized  
 in infancy. Thus stands the argument from circum-  
 cision; which, with the distinction of the covenants,  
 I have handled fully in my seventh Letter to Mr. Glas.

Nothing can be more agreeable to scripture than  
 what Mr Glas advances upon the distinction of the  
 fleshly and spiritual seed, through the greatest part  
 of his writings. The whole of his excellent treatise  
 on the kingdom of Christ as not of this world,  
 is founded upon that distinction. There he tells  
 us, that " The earthly birth, or that birth after  
 " the flesh, availed much in the state of the church  
 " erected at Sinai, as to the enjoyment of the pri-

"vileges of it. But now, our Lord says to Nico-  
 "demus, Except a man be born again, (or from  
 "above), he cannot see the kingdom of God." &c.\*  
 Would not any one think, that he here sets aside  
 the fleshly birth, or connection with believing pa-  
 rents, as of no account in the kingdom of Christ?  
 But it seems he meant no such thing; for, by his  
 rule of distinguishing the infant subjects of the  
 kingdom of heaven, he gives as much place to the  
 fleshly birth, as ever it had in the Jewish church;  
 and so builds again the things which he destroyed.  
 But if his adherents will still maintain, that he  
 keeps this distinction clear and consistent, I would  
 be glad to be informed wherein it lies. The distinc-  
 tion does not ly in this, that the holiness of believ-  
 ers children comes not by natural generation; for  
 neither did that of old Israel come by natural gene-  
 ration, but by a covenant separating them and their  
 seed to be a peculiar people to the Lord:—Nor does  
 it ly in this, that the word of God declares the in-  
 fants of believers holy; for so does it declare those  
 of old Israel:—Neither does the distinction ly in this,  
 that the fleshly birth does not entitle to the spiri-  
 tual privileges of Christ's kingdom; for neither did  
 it entitle to the temporal privileges of the earthly  
 kingdom. Old Israel obtained the earthly inheri-  
 tance by the covenant made with their father Abra-  
 ham, Gen. xv. 18. abstract from this, they had no  
 claim to it upon the footing of their birth or righte-  
 ousness more than any other people, Deut. ix. 4,  
 5, 6. Wherein, then; did the fleshly birth avail  
 more formerly than it does now? or what is the  
 foundation of the above distinction? If his argu-  
 ments for infant pouring (so he leads us to call it)

hold.



hold good, it undeniably follows, that the earthly birth, or that birth after the flesh, avails *more* in the kingdom of God, than ever it did in the state of the church erected at Sinai; for then it could only distinguish the *fleshly seed* of Abraham, who were typically holy, and entitled to the temporal privileges of the earthly kingdom; whereas, under the gospel, he makes it to distinguish the *spiritual seed* of Christ, who are truly holy, and entitled to the spiritual and everlasting privileges of the kingdom of heaven.

I shall conclude these miscellaneous observations with a word or two upon Mr. Stuart's fast-day Sermon on the kingdom of Christ. Speaking of the distinction of Christ's subjects from the world, he says, "They are such as *know* the Father as he hath discovered him;—*receive* and are *firmly* *persuaded* of the divine authority in Christ's words;—are brought into a delightful and com-  
 placent *union* with one another;—are preserved in this, and in union with God, by the *words* of Jesus;—through these too partake of his ineffable joy \*." Distinguishing them from the subjects of the earthly kingdom by the nature of their *birth*, he says, that John gives an account of the way that subjects were born to God under the law, John i. 10—14. but that the new and heavenly birth by which men enter into the kingdom of God is set forth in Christ's discourse with Nicodemus, chap. iii. 1—6 †. He distinguishes also their *holiness*: "Israel indeed was a holy nation; but the national holiness of Israel was only outward and typical. They were a holy people by virtue of their descent from the sons of Jacob, and by vir-

"*tue*

“ tue of their observation of the covenant made  
 “ with them at Sinai. But the holiness of Christ’s  
 “ kingdom is the substance of this. All his sub-  
 “ jects are *really* and *internally*, as well as out-  
 “ wardly holy \*.” He denies they can be distin-  
 guished without *charity*: “ Outward appearances  
 “ which fall short of proving persons possessed of  
 “ charity, shall no more *mark them out*, as once,  
 “ the subjects of the kingdom of God †.” He  
 rejects the distinction betwixt the subjects of  
 Christ’s kingdom as it appears in this world, and  
 the spiritually holy nation of them that are saved,  
 as a distinction only suited to a national church.  
 “ The apostles describe the kingdom of Christ by  
 “ names, privileges and characters, which do not  
 “ belong, nay, are opposite to these which belong  
 “ to the kingdoms of this world. They write to  
 “ every particular congregation or church, and  
 “ of them, as consisting of these, all of whom  
 “ without exception they judged to be the chil-  
 “ dren of God, chosen, redeemed, called and se-  
 “ parated from the world.—None, it is evident,  
 “ were Christians in the sight or opinion of the  
 “ apostles, who they were not bound to think,  
 “ and did not think, Christians in God’s sight ‡.”

I confess I was much edified and delighted with  
 his description of Christ’s subjects, and my heart  
 warmed in love to the author for the truth’s sake,  
 which he so clearly and boldly maintains through  
 the

\* Page 5. † Ibid.

‡ Page, 8, 9. His brother, the anonymous Remarker on Scrip-  
 ture Texts, is, however, of a very different opinion, and charges  
 those who hold the above sentiment with “ deceiving the hearts of  
 “ those who believe without proper evidence, and blinding the  
 “ minds of those who receive not the simple sayings of the Son of  
 “ God.” But perhaps, this is one of the things on which they have  
 agreed to differ.

the most of that Sermon. But how great was my disappointment when I advanced to page 43d, and found him distinguishing the subjects of Christ's kingdom by characters very different from the above ! No sooner does he turn his thoughts to infant baptism, than his views of the kingdom are immediately corrupted, and, losing sight of the grand hinge of the difference, he descends into mere trifling with the national church about *sponsors*, *bastards* and *foundlings* ; as if the distinction betwixt Christ's subjects and the world stood in the *faith of their parents*, or the *legitimacy* of their carnal birth ! Alas, what a falling off is here !

He cannot admit of sponsors "because all the lines of argument in favours of infant baptism issue from the *faith of the parent* as their center ; but this device supposes the contrary, at least its doubtfulness \*." Yet the device of sponsors is far more ancient in the church called Christian than the device of the parents faith, though both of them are devices equally void of foundation in the word of God with that other device for which they were devised. After all, what is the parent in this case but a sponsor for his child in the strictest sense of the word ? Are the subjects of the kingdom of heaven then to be distinguished by the faith of another ? Does this distinction correspond with any of the above ? or rather, does it not overthrow them, and make all that has been said upon the subject much ado about nothing ? Again, if infant baptism rest entirely on the faith of the parent, then neither he nor his brethren can be sure they have obtained Christian baptism, unless they know their parents were believers.

As

As to *bastards* and *foundlings*, where do we find the New Testament distinguishing the subjects of baptism from these? Does the legitimacy or illegitimacy of 'the carnal birth make any difference in the kingdom of Christ? The Jews indeed claimed a relation to God as his children, from their being Abraham's seed, and not *born of fornication*, like the unlawful issue of idolaters; but our Lord repels their claim upon that footing, and gives them to understand, that unless they believed, continued in his word, loved him, and did the works of Abraham, neither the *faith* of Abraham their father, (however distinguished), nor the *legitimacy* of their carnal birth, could avail them any thing, as to the enjoyment of the privileges of his kingdom, John viii. 31 — 48.

Upon the whole, we may affirm, that no man can hold the distinction of the kingdom of Christ from the Jewish theocracy and kingdoms of this world, in any consistency with the arguments for infant baptism. This point, however trivial it may appear to some, is of such a nature as to affect all our ideas of that distinction, and leaven the whole. For, if we once admit the notion, that the subjects, which compose this kingdom, may be known or distinguished by any thing, be what it will, which comes short of manifesting their being of the truth, believing it, loving it, hearing Christ's voice and following him, this single sentiment, if followed out, will infallibly lead us to blend the kingdom of Christ with the world even in its visible appearance, and make all we advance to the contrary a jumble of inconsistencies.

T H E E N D.







